

ECCLESIASTES

OR

THE PREACHER

A NEW TRANSLATION,
WITH INTRODUCTION NOTES,
GLOSSARY AND INDEX

This book is edited on the same lines as the author's previous work on Proverbs and contains much interesting information especially on the meaning of words. Many obscure passages have light thrown upon them, and the various opinions of other commentators are compared and discussed. The Glossary and Index as well as the cross headings are useful helps to the study of this concise but comprehensive commentary.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

256 pp. 6s. net

"... deserves a cordial welcome from the ranks of clergy and teacher. They will find the seventy-seven pages of Notes extremely useful; and the sixty-one pages of the Glossary and the twenty pages of the Index are a valuable aid to the study of Proverbs in the original Hebrew. In this book, as in his Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sira), published ten years ago, the editor has again shown the possession of a gift for clarity and simplicity which throws much light on many an obscure passage."—*Zionist Review*.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

64 pp. 3s. 6d.

"All readers of the Bible will be grateful to Mr. Power for an illuminating study, at once scholarly and easy to read while furnishing an invaluable handbook to one of the most remarkable books of the Old Testament. It provides the general reader also with an instructive example of Old Testament Study."—*The Guardian*.

Published by

LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.

also

ECCLESIASTICUS

A New Confutation

170 pp. 3s. 6d. net

"A delightful volume which will enable the general reader to follow the thought contained in the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sira with new zest and appreciation. The value of the book too, has been greatly enhanced by a particularly good index, while the cross headings to the different paragraphs make reference to any subject a matter of the utmost simplicity. Preachers and teachers will find the volume of great use."—*Times Literary Supplement*.

Published by

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

ECCLESIASTES
OR
THE PREACHER

ADVERTISEMENT

. . . the charm and fascination of this remarkable book. Throughout the centuries it has preserved its freshness, the vivid, alive quality of a thinker who faced the inexorable vanities of life and yet, somehow, never lost the joy of living.

Victor E. Reichert

The labour of a fretful Hebrew Philosopher, composed in a morose mood, and exceedingly tedious in places.

A. T. Hartmann

One of the most charming books of antiquity and one of the most obscure books of the Bible . . . a profoundly modern book . . . is just like a little essay of Voltaire which has gone astray among the folios of a theological library.

Ernest Renan

Represents the last extreme of scepticism within the Hebrew philosophy, and this in a barbarous style.

W. L. M. De Wette

This noble little book, which for good reasons it were exceedingly worth while that it should be read of all men with great carefulness every day.

Martin Luther

A tissue of loose disjointed aphorisms and contradictory theses, concerning the highest problems of ethics and metaphysics. The form of the work is characterised by an utter lack of plan; the matter by almost impenetrable obscurity.

E. J. Dillon

One of man's noblest offerings on the altar of truth.

R. Gordis

Unique in the whole range of Biblical literature.

C. H. H. Wright

This strange book should be used cautiously (if at all) as an authority, for it gives the speculations of a recluse, and not any generally accepted doctrine.

W. Emery Barnes

ECCLESIASTES
OR
THE PREACHER

A NEW TRANSLATION,
WITH INTRODUCTION NOTES,
GLOSSARY AND INDEX

BY
A. D. POWER



LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO
LONDON • NEW YORK • TORONTO

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO LTD
6 & 7 CLIFFORD STREET LONDON W 1

ALSO AT MELBOURNE AND CAPE TOWN

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO INC
55 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 3

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO
215 VICTORIA STREET TORONTO 1

ORIENT LONGMANS LTD
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS

This edition first published 1952

*Printed in Great Britain by
Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., Bath*

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Authorities	vi
Abbreviations	viii
Introduction	I
Text	33
Notes	55
Glossary .	135
Index	147

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Editor has to thank Professor S. H. Hooke for reading through the typescript and the printed proof, and for many valuable suggestions and much kindly help, but he must not be held responsible for any mistakes which the Author has made.

AUTHORITIES

G.C.A.	G. C. Aalders	M.D.	M. Devine
M.A.	Marcus Aurelius	W. de W.	W. M. L. de Wette
K.C.B.	K. C. Bahr	A.D.	A. Dillmann
G.A.B.	*G. A. Barton	E.J.D.	*E. J. Dillon
J.M.B.	J. M. T. Barton	J.C.D.	J. C. Döderlein
A.B.	A. Bea	S.R.D.	S. R. Driver
G.B.	G. Bickell	J.G.E.	J. G. Eichhorn
J.S.B.	J. S. Bloch	A.B.E.	A. B. Ehrlich
W.B.	W. Baumgartner	E.E.	E. Elster
S.B.	S. Bockhart	H.E.	*H. Ewald
G.H.B.	G. H. Box	I.E.	Ibn Ezra
G.G.B.	G. G. Bradley	F.F.	Farrer Fenton
B.D.B.	Brown Driver Briggs Heb. Lex.	H.F.	H. L. Fleischer
W.T.B.	W. T. Bullock	W.B.F.	*W. B. Forbush
F.C.B.	F. C. Burkitt	D.F.	D. Friedländer
F.B.	F. Buhl	K.G.	K. Galling
T.K.C.	T. K. Cheyne	M.G.	M. Geier
A.C.	†A. Cohen	J.F.G.	J. F. Genung
C.H.C.	C. H. Cornill	W.G.	W. Gesenius
S.C.	S. Cox	C.D.G.	*C. D. Ginsburg
S.D.	Samuel Daiches	H.L.G.	†H. L. Ginsberg
T.P.D.	*T. P. Dale	R.G.	*R. Gordis
A.B.D.	A. B. Davidson	H.Grä.	†H. Grätz
F.D.J.	F. De Jong	H.Gro.	H. Grotius
F.D.	F. Delitzsch	A.J.G.	A. J. Grieve
A.V.D.	*A. V. Desvoeux	H.D.H.	H. D. Hahn
		P.H.	P. Haupt

* An asterisk indicates writers who have made their own translations into English. Many others, not enumerated here, have made translations into other European languages.

† Jewish.

The above names are those only of the more frequently quoted commentators, and others, out of a much larger list, but they also include some who have dealt with only a particular aspect of the book.

AUTHORITIES

E.W.H.	E. W. H. Hengstenberg	J.N.	J. C. C. Nachtigal
J.G.H.	J. G. Herder	A.Ne.	A. Neubauer
L.H.	†L. Herzfeld	A.Ni.	A. Nisbet
F.H.	F. Hitzig	T.N.	T. Nöldeke
S.H.H.	*S. H. Hooke	C.R.N.	C. R. North
B.H.	*B. Hodgson	G.R.N.	*G. R. Noyes
M.J.	M. Jastrow	H.O.	*H. Odeberg
A.R.J.	A. R. Johnson	W.O.	W. O. E. Oesterley
D.K.	D. G. P. C. Kaiser	A.S.P.	A. S. Peake
M.M.K.	*M. M. Kalisch	J.P.	J. Pedersen
J.K.	J. Kennedy	J.S.P.	J. J. S. Perowne
R.H.K.	R. H. Kennett	E.H.P.	E. H. Plumptre
O.K.	*Omar Khayyam	E.P.	E. Podechard
P.K.	P. Kleinert	S.P.	*S. Pollock
A.Kl.	A. Klostermann	E.B.P.	E. B. Pusey
A.Kn.	A. Knobel	J.Q.	*J. Quarles
R.A.K.	*R. A. Knox	H.R.	H. Ranston
N.K.	N. Kochmal	V.E.R.	†V. E. Reichert
A.Ku.	A. Kuenen	J.E.R.	J. E. Renan
G.K.	G. Kuhn	E.F.R.	E. F. C. Rosenmüller
T.L.	*Tayler Lewis		
L.H.L.	L. H. Loewenstein	N.R.	†N. Rosenthal
H.L.	H. Loewe	T.H.R.	T. H. Robinson
R.L.	R. Lowth	H.H.R.	H. H. Rowley
M.L.	M. Luther	S.S.	S. Schechter
S.D.L.	†S. D. Luzzatto	S.N.S.	S. N. Sedgwick
J.E.M.	*J. E. McFadyen	C.S.	C. Siegfried
W.D.M.	W. D. McHardy	B.S.	Ben Sira
A.H.M.	*A. H. McNeill	J.P.S.	*J. M. P. Smith
D.S.M.	D. S. Margoliouth	J.C.S.	J. C. F. Stendel
G.C.M.	G. C. Martin	A.J.T.	American Jewish Translation
P.M.	P. Menzel	C.T.	*C. Taylor
J.D.M.	J. D. Michaelis	M.T.	Massoretic Text
J.M.	*J. Moffatt	R.T.	Received Text
C.G.M.	C. G. Montefiore	E.T.	E. Thilo

AUTHORITIES

D.W.T.	D. W. Thomas	H.W.	H. Winckler
T.T.	*T. Tyler	C.W.	C. Wordsworth
C.H.T.	C. H. Toy	C.H.W.	*C. H. H. Wright
F.U.	F. W. C. Umbreit	F.Y.	F. Yead
J.G.V.	J. G. Vaihinger	R.Y.	*R. Young
B.W.	*B. Weiss	V.Z.	V. Zaplitai
G.W.	G. Wildeboer	G.Z.	G. Zirkel
A.L.W.	*A. L. Williams	O.Z.	O. Zöckler

ABBREVIATIONS

Arab.	Arabic	n.	note
Aram.	Aramaic	N.H.	New Hebrew
A.V.	Authorised Version	N.T.	New Testament
B.H.	Biblical Hebrew	O.T.	Old Testament
bis.	twice	Ors.	others
e.g.	for example	P.B.	Post Biblical
E.VV.	English Versions	q.v.	which see
f.	following verse	R.T.	Received Text
ff.	following verses	R.V.	Revised Version
Glos.	Glossary	Syr.	Syriac Version
i.e.	that is	Targ.	Targum
Lat.	Latin	tr.	translate-d-ion
LXX	Septuagint	v.	verse
MS.	manuscript	Vulg.	Vulgate
M.T.	Massoretic Text		

INTRODUCTION

THE object of this introduction and the notes which follow the text is not to propound some new theory, but as far as possible in a small compass to state the more important conclusions at which the principal authorities have arrived—not to argue too much for this or that side, but to leave the reader to make his own choice.

SOLOMON

The most disputed of many debatable points about Ecc. concerns its general plan and its date. Of its authorship, or rather the fiction that Solomon wrote it, there is now little if any doubt, though up to a generation or so ago commentators like W.T.B., E.B.P. and T.L. still stoutly maintained the Solomonic authorship, but there must be very few scholars of any note within the last seventy years, and none within this century, who still adhere to the idea that Solomon was the author. It was not until the fourteenth century that Luther first began to cast doubts on the then universal belief that Solomon had really written it; over 100 years later Grotius also came to the same conclusion, but not until comparatively recent years has there been so much unanimity among scholars in agreeing that whoever wrote the book it certainly was not Solomon. Briefly stated the main reasons why this may now be taken as an undisputed fact are as follow: first and chiefly the style and language of the book. "If Ecclesiastes belongs to the time of Solomon the Hebrew language has no history" (T.K.C.) "We could as easily believe that

Chaucer is the author of Rabelais as that Solomon wrote Koheleth" (C.D.G.).

Secondly the book does not pretend to be written by him. There is not a single mention of Solomon nor anything to suggest his personality in the Prologue or Epilogue, and only in the biography (1¹²-2²⁶) is there any hint in the text of a person like Solomon being connected in any way with the book. No doubt the real and original author intended his readers to understand it to be a book such as Solomon might have written had he lived in Koheleth's time.

The book deviates further than any other in the Old Testament from the Ancient Hebrew (O.Z.), old Hebrew forms and constructions are altered, Aramaic words are introduced, there is a close resemblance to early Rabbinic New Hebrew, and there are many peculiarities of grammar and syntax. These in all amount up to about one hundred. It is not the purpose of this little book to draw attention to every word or form of a word which may point to Ecclesiastes having been written long after Solomon's time, but they all tend to form accumulative evidence, and the reader must be content with having pointed out to him here and there in the notes some of the more obvious (all of which are backed by competent authorities).

All that need be said in conclusion on this matter is that the arguments put forward by those who defend the Solomonic authorship (and most of the older commentators took it for granted), are very flimsy and do not bear investigation, especially their attempts to prove that words essentially Aramaic *might* have been used by Solomon. One of the most plausible arguments, perhaps, is that in course of transcription words *may* have been altered (as an American to-day would alter

the spelling of such a word as "through" to "thru" if he were copying an English MS.) and that additional sentences were added by different editors from time to time. Dr. Adam Clarke in 1813 very tentatively suggested that Solomon might have been the original author and that a subsequent writer might have rewritten it in more modern Hebrew.

W.B.'s suggestion that K. is a literary disguise taken over from Egyptian practice is worth consideration, and particularly that the impersonation is one of position rather than of personal identity.

THE Book

Ecc. is one of the Five Megilloth or Rolls, so called because they were originally written on Scrolls of parchment placed round a wooden roller. The other four are Ruth, Lamentations, Esther and the Song of Songs. These five are a part of the third section of the Hebrew Scriptures known as Hagiographa (the Greek for holy writings), which contain the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles.

Ecclesiastes is a Greek word by which the LXX translated (and the English Bible has adopted) the Hebrew Koheleth (or rather Qoheleth) which was the title given to the book by the Jews, and means member of the Church.

It is one of the most difficult books in the Old Testament to understand. It is wrapt in mystery—its authorship, its date, its language, its object, its title, have all been debated this way and that for centuries and no conclusion has met with the unanimous agreement of commentators. Often, perhaps more often than not, whole passages seem to be studiously obscure as if trying to live up to the reputation of enigmas and dark sayings.

THE TITLE

The derivatives of the Hebrew root "qahah" are translated by the A.V. in other parts of the O.T.—as a verb—to assemble or gather together, and as a noun, congregation, assembly, company, or multitude. That Koheleth should be an active participle with a feminine termination to it has worried critics for a long time, but need not worry us here in a non-critical book; what will interest readers more is the meaning which the author wanted to convey by the use of the pseudonym he had invented.

Without going into all the pros and cons, the following list will give some idea of the many different interpretations placed upon the word by as many different commentators.

Assembler	Member of an Assembly
Compiler	Penitent
Collector	Philosopher
Debater	Preacher,
Gatherer	Prediger
Great Orator	Sage
The Ideal Teacher	Sophist
Lecturer	Teacher

All the above do not pretend to be literal translations but each is sponsored by a responsible scholar. Other suggestions not included here are too fanciful to deserve mention.

Like Malachi, the pseudonymous author of the last of the Old Testament prophets (who preferred to be known as "My messenger"), "Koheleth" is more likely to be just a pseudonym with a hidden suggestion. In the text here the A.V. translation "Preacher" will be

retained, in the notes the author will be referred to as Koheleth, or K.

Not content with the manifold equivalents in English suggested for Koheleth many fancy titles as alternatives have been put forward, some of which are given below merely as curiosities: "The Song (or Canticles) of Scepticism" (Heine), "The Song of the Fear of God" or "Solomon Redivivus" (Delitzsch), "Breviary of Modern Materialism" (Hartmann), "Cosmos or Chaos" (Bradley), "An Uncomfortable Interrogation Mark" (Jastrow), and lastly "A Tangled Skein."

KOHELETH

If Solomon were not the author, who was? The answer of course is Koheleth, but who was Koheleth, and was he the sole author? Who Koheleth really was we shall probably never know and we can only guess what manner of man he was. Of guesses there have been plenty, and perhaps the best plan is to put some of these down in tabular form and let the reader make his own choice, for each of the names by which he has been called has been given to him by at least one reputable authority, and repudiated by another.

Agnostic	Pessimist
Cynic	Pharisee
Egoist	Philosopher
Epicurean	Sadducee
Fatalist	Sceptic
Heretic	Stoic

This list by no means exhausts the lot. More will be found in the following summaries of various commentators who have tried to portray the character of K. For instance M.J. thinks he was an amiable bachelor

who had grown old gracefully, non-religious rather than irreligious, an easy going dilettante in philosophy and a free lance in religion, unorthodox but not an atheist, ironical, humorous and brutally frank; not a scoffer or a pessimist down to the bone, but just a gentle cynic. E.R. also suspects K. of having been a bachelor, and declares he was a man of the world and an amiable egoist, neither pious nor a theologian. R.G. is of opinion that K. was a disillusioned old man either a bachelor or childless, a cultured aristocrat of the old school. W.G. and T.K.C. both call him the Ideal Teacher. Another says he was an old sceptic and agnostic, who found life's problems insoluble, and with a stoic but hopeless courage recommended a life of moderate enjoyment. T.T. on the other hand says he was not a stoic, but Greek Philosophy may have had an influence on him. H.E. thought he was a pious Israelite with no practice in writing. E.H.P., T.T. and E.J.D. each thought he had travelled beyond Palestine, the first that he may have lived and died in Alexandria, the next that he had even ventured as far as Athens, and the last that while he might have lived in Jerusalem it is more probable he lived in Alexandria. E.J.D. also said that K. was "not concerned with pure Stoicism or with pure Epicureanism—he deals with the philosophical opinions promulgated in the Jewish Schools of his day." A.B. maintains that K. was no sceptic or pessimist or Epicurean, but a man with a firm belief in God, who recognised the limitations of his own knowledge in regard to life's problems and difficulties. A.H.M. calls him "a thinking Jew who had the makings of a Greek philosopher," while E.J.D. says there was "none less orthodox in his beliefs or less Jewish in his sentiments than K." H.E. calls him "a pious Israelite,"

and F.D. says "without doubt he was a Palestinian advanced in years who had behind him a checkered career." P.H. thought he was a prominent Sadducean physician in Jerusalem who lived about 175-104 B.C. H.O. says of K. that he was not sceptical with regard to the positive part of his teaching, and that he did not adopt a hedonistic view of life, nor was he a confirmed pessimist or an infidel. God was the centre of his life. S.R.D. and A.H.M. also deny that he was a pessimist. The name of Bernard Shaw is not often found in the commentaries on any book of the Bible, but here he may be quoted as saying that K. was one of the ablest thinkers of the world, though he was a pessimist because the world is crowded with evil as much as good. Where so many doctors differ it must be left for the reader to make his own choice. Perhaps the author was a mixture of all the qualities accredited to him.

EPICUREAN, STOIC, PESSIMIST

Several commentators consider K. was a Stoic, i.e. that he followed the principle of living conformably to nature, among them C.T. Others like T.T., E.H.P. and T.K.C. thought he was an Epicurean. Perhaps he was a little of both; it seems unlikely that he was whole-heartedly one or the other. E.J.D. thinks he had in him a "peculiar mixture of Pessimism and Epicureanism." A.B. maintains that K. was no sceptic, or pessimist epicurean, but a man with a firm belief in God, who recognised the limitations of his own knowledge in regard to life's problems and difficulties. When it comes to the question was he a Pessimist? the grounds for thinking so are somewhat surer. But if that word implies cowardice, melancholia, hypochondriasis or atheism, all of which were characteristics of Arthur

Schopenhauer the founder of the Modern School of Pessimism, then the answer surely is in the negative. A. Taubert, who considered the books of Job, K., Lam. and Jer. little different from the so-called philosophy of Schopenhauer, recommends that Ecc. 1¹⁻¹¹ and 4¹⁻⁴, which she dubs "A Catechism of Pessimism," should be read and studied.

INTERPOLATORS

If K. and K. alone was not the one and only author of Ecc. who else was or were, and how much of the whole book consists of interpolations? Out of a list of nearly thirty authorities something like one third believe in the unity of the book or that it is, as O.Z. puts it, "one connected whole . . . a work from one mould," others favour the idea of a dialogue, while others believe that there are five interpolators, a Pessimist, an Epicurean, a Sage, an orthodox Jew (perhaps a Pharisee) and possibly a final editor, and C.S. puts the number as high as nine. P.H. probably heads the list with what he thinks is the total number of interpolations in the book, for he calculates, according to G.A.B., that only 124 verses are genuine and that parts of these contain small glosses. He and G.B. rearrange the whole book in order to make it more connected. M.J. must run P.H. a close second. He rejects something like forty whole verses and over sixty lesser incursions, which he attributes to "pious" commentators, "maxim" commentators, or other miscellaneous writers of comments and glosses. At the other extreme are those who believe that the entire book was written by one hand and to account for the numerous contradictions in the book are of the opinion that the heterodox sentiments were purposely inserted by the original author himself who

meant them to be taken as interpolations by an infidel in order to refute them, just as was done, only more frankly, in Wisdom 2-3. The duologue theory espoused by F.Y. and J.G. is that there are two voices, that of an enquirer seeking after truth and that of a warning teacher. The former speaks from 1¹-4¹⁶ and the teacher interrupts from 4¹⁷-5⁸ and so on, the teacher intervening thereafter only eight times, viz. at 7²⁻¹⁵, 17-23 8²⁻¹³, 9⁴⁻¹⁰, 10⁴, 8-19, 20 and 11¹⁻¹². J.G.E. is another adherent to the duologue theory. His division of the conversation differs little from J.G.H.

Many distinguished authorities are among those who believe in the integrity of the whole book, and many believe in one or more interpolators. There is much to be said for the latter theory, which certainly accounts for the many contradictions to be found in Ecc. Throughout the Notes attention will be drawn to the more obvious ones as well as to some of the more likely interpolations. Emery Barnes's theory is that "the book is the record of a discussion imaginary in form but real in matter. The names of the interlocutors are not given. The pessimist is allowed to speak at length and with entire frankness." R.G. believes the book to be a unity.

Badly as the book appears to be edited K. must not be blamed for this, since, if in order to counteract his amoral advice and rebut the scepticism which pervaded the original book, others have inserted their own views, the result is bound to be something in the nature of a hotch potch.

CONTRADICTIONS

How is one to account for the many contradictions in the book? Time and again K. makes a statement

only to contradict it in the next breath. If we can accept the theory that pious glossators were at work, most of these can be explained right away on the supposition that they were inserted in order to counteract the unorthodox teaching of the original author and this seems to be the most plausible explanation. The reader will discover these for himself and he will also find most of them indexed at the end of this book.

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

What object, if any, did the author have in mind when he wrote the book, or were the contents, as some think, stray notes jotted down from time to time in his diary, discovered after his death and published by an unskilful editor? That is a question which is never likely to be answered to everybody's satisfaction. Many suggestions have been made, and of course all the early commentators, when attempting to solve the problem, did so on the assumption that the author was Solomon and Solomon only. Many of them, following one another, fell back on the traditional view—which almost became a cliché—"to propound the sovereign good" and how to obtain it. Some actually explained that Solomon was transported by the spirit of prophecy in order to depict the future history of the Jews. To quote a tithe of all the views expressed by commentators throughout the centuries would fill far too much space; only a few samples can be given and those drastically lopped.

They are all taken from Christian commentators and begin with—

Martin Luther (1532). He thought the object was to teach men to repress their efforts to heap up wealth, and to instruct them not to increase the troubles of life by denying themselves harmless but fleeting pleasures.

Hugo Grotius (1644). To show the unhappiness of a man separated from God and to point out a true and lasting enjoyment of this life.

David Friedländer (1788). Contemplations upon the fruitless struggle after happiness and the vanity of human affairs.

J. C. C. Nachtigal (1798). To agitate and explain doubts and thus to develop the intellectual faculties.

S. R. Driver (1892). Meditations on human life and society reflecting the author's changing moods.

J. F. Genung (1904). To recall the religious spirit of the time back to reality.

Hugo Odeberg (1929). To lead men into the enjoyment of a better life.

A few more very much abbreviated—The Vanity of human things and the enjoyment of life. G.R.N. (1846). To prove the immortality of the soul. A.V.D. (1760) and J.G.V. (1848). To show that nothing earthly is stable. J.C.S. (1840). To show that everything is worthless except enjoyment. W. de W. (1844).

Lastly many commentators thought that Solomon wrote the book in his old age as a public testimony after he had repented of his sins, but this will hardly hold water, since in the whole book there is not one word of penitence, nor remorse, nor any "evidence of a broken and a contrite heart," as George Holden in 1822 declared there was. Had he been acting such a part he would surely have confessed his sins of adultery, idolatry and fratricide. Then, too, one looks in vain for any reference to his building of the Temple.

DATE

Like everything else about Koheleth the date when it was written has been hotly debated and opinions

have varied from 975 B.C. to 8 B.C. If however we may take it for granted that Solomon was not the author, these figures can be considerably narrowed down. But even so there is a wide margin to choose from. G.C.A. places the book in the last period of the Persian rule, and considers the author to have been a Jew from Jerusalem. Some of the authorities are vague, others remarkably precise, others tentative and almost apologetic, and several so sure of their own opinions that they have little patience with those who do not share them. Generally speaking however it may be safely said the date is more likely to be later than 300 B.C. but rather earlier than 200 B.C., though nearer the latter than the former. Even leaving it as vague as that, one cannot be dogmatic and readers must make up their own minds.

From a census taken of over thirty noted authorities of modern times it was found that exactly one half (including F.D., S.R.D., and C.D.G.) believed the book was composed before 330 B.C., and the other half (including C.H.T., A.L.W., E.H.P. and E.R.) thought it was written during the Persian domination.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

On the question of language and style commentators as usual are at variance. Said Bishop Lowth: "the language is generally low, I might almost call it mean or vulgar, it is frequently loose, unconnected approaching to the incorrectness of conversation and possesses very little of the poetical character, even in the composition and structure of the periods—which peculiarity may possibly be accounted for from the nature of the subject." T.K.C. also speaks of its "loose notes." T.T. praises the artistic skill displayed by Koheleth in his style and diction, thinks it is philosophical rather than religious,

and is not the word of the Lord, and as far as its language is concerned, has a close approach to Rabbinic Hebrew; M.J. talks of the author's "great literary skill"; F.D. says "it is almost wholly written in eloquent form"; H.E. that the author had had no practice in writing; T.K.C. says he abstains from fine writing and that 12⁴⁻⁹ "has a touch of the extravagant euphuism of late Arabic literature"; F.C.B. characterises the book as "clever thinking in a bald style . . . perceptible in E.V. but far more in Hebrew. No literary charm in the book . . . the style is neither correct or natural." Other views are that "it belongs to a degenerate period of art"; that "the poetry is inferior to Job"; that "it reads better in the English of the A.V. than in the late debased Hebrew in which it was originally written with many Aramaic words introduced"; and another critic writes: "As literature the book cannot be classed with other parts of the Old Testament. It is written in debased Hebrew with many borrowed words from the Aramaic, and a couple from the Persian."

The Translation Theory

Here is a suitable place to mention another suggestion that was put forward in 1922 by F. C. Burkitt, wrangler, Semitic scholar, and Professor of Divinity; he did not attempt to prove that the book is in fact a translation from the Aramaic, but asked is it? and gave his reasons for thinking it might be, but left the question open, as it still remains. "It seems to me," he said, "to have the awkward stiffness of a translation—if so from the Aramaic." S.R.D. had several years before, in his Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, hinted at the same idea, when he suggested that the author "thought in Aramaic and translated the Aramaic idiom, part by

part into unidiomatic Hebrew." In 1950 H. L. Ginsberg, an American Jew, in a pamphlet he published brought forth arguments by which he hoped to prove as far as possible that the Hebrew or the R.T. was a translation from the Aramaic.

Greek Influence

Greek influence both in thought and language is another theory about which authorities differ. It is believed that the first commentator to raise this point was G.Z. at the end of the eighteenth century, but he tried to prove too much (H. Grä.) and hurried to explain any peculiar word or construction by some Greek parallel (T.K.C.). In an exhaustive study of Ecclesiastes and the Early Greek Wisdom literature, Dr. Harry Ranston in 1925 came to the conclusion that Koheleth was not widely or deeply acquainted with the early Greek literature, but that there are signs that Theognis (520 B.C.) was the main source of his foreign aphorisms and that Hesiod (700 B.C.) was also drawn upon. J.P. and K.G. however regard the matter of literary dependence on Theognis and the Greek gnomists as mere superficial resemblance.

Taking over thirty authorities who have studied the subject it may be said on the whole that they are fairly divided for and against, with the scales tilting slightly towards the Greek; T.K.C. is sceptical and says there are no Graecisms in Ecc., but thinks ideas may have been borrowed from a Greek source.

D.S.M. confidently declares that supposed Graecisms are "all imaginary," and, though he grudgingly admits he is disposed to regard K.'s language as characteristic of comparatively late Hebrew, he states emphatically that borrowings from Greek philosophy are all fallacious.

He sees a trace of Epicureanism in 9¹⁻¹² but thinks that so-called Epicurean passages should be read with caution. T.P.D. says there is no scoffing Epicureanism in the book. F.D. also declares that K. "shows not a trace of Greek influence." Many of the instances quoted by those who believe in the Greek influence are of such a technical nature they hardly come within the scope of this book and only here and there will be mentioned in the Notes. They are not so much similarities of thought as similarities of idioms and phrases and grammatical peculiarities. Similarities of thought are to be found in plenty between K. and Marcus Aurelius, but so there are between him and Horace, and Omar Khayyam, and Ben Sira and many others who were not Greek and some of whom lived long after him.

Out of the thirty or more authorities mentioned above a dozen believe in Persian influence, one Roman, and the rest consider the book to be mainly Hebraic. C.H.C. sums up the situation thus by describing Koheleth as "in head a Greek, in heart a Jew." K.G. however favours the influence of Egypt, where (in Alexandria) the book may have been written.

Aramaisms

Under the heading of Language and Style reference must certainly be made to the vexed question of the large number of words suspected of being foreign or late (or new) Hebrew. Here those who wished to believe in the Solomonic authorship of the book are few and their arguments unconvincing. The more recent of these are E.B.P., W.T.B. and T.L. who edited or rather disputed many of O.Z.'s views in their commentary published in 1868. He repudiated all alleged words given as examples to prove the late date of the book,

but his arguments are more likely to convert any one who believed in the Solomonic authorship into a disbeliever. L.H., who did not believe that Solomon was the author, thought that many words and phrases were wrongly explained as N.H. or Aramaic, and reduced the numbers by at least seventy-five per cent, admitted that a considerable number of both remained. It is hardly necessary to give the names of those who take an opposite view for they include almost every modern critic. One for example, wrote: "The Hebrew is so strongly permeated with the Aramaic that there are not only many individual words entirely Aramaic but the foreign influence extends into the smallest veins. Indeed the book deviates further than any other in the Old Testament from the Ancient Hebrew."

H.G. in the sixteenth century made a collection of about 100 words and phrases of a late period. At the lowest computation there are about 100 words and forms of words in Koheleth which are found only there or in the later books of the Old Testament and in Mishnic literature and New Hebrew. There is not a chapter which does not contain at least three or four and some chapters (1, 2, 5, 8, 10 and 12) have over ten. It is true however that derivatives from the roots of the Aramaisms are to be found in Biblical Hebrew. Another point to be remembered is that Koheleth uses Biblical Hebrew words which had changed their meanings (as many English words have since the A.V. was published). The more striking of these are indicated in the notes; but many are of no interest to the general reader, since they are matters of spelling, or grammar or syntax and do not affect the meaning of the word. They are, however, important because they go to prove that Koheleth must have written the book

long after the time of Solomon. Borrowed, or loan words, are not only the mile stones of philology, but often enable us, as Prof. Jespersen says, to fix dates in history.

Persian Words

A brief reference to Persian influence, if any, on the author of Ecc., may be added here. There is little to be said, for nothing can be proved. There are, it is true, two Persian words to be found in the book. One, "paradise,"²⁵ is also found in other languages, e.g. Greek and even English, the other "pitgam,"⁸¹¹ meaning a decree may be likened to our use of the Russian "ukase" for the same word, but these two words hardly justify us in saying that K.'s language was influenced to any extent by the Persian. If it is true that if Ecc. was written during the period of Persian supremacy and some of the stories are really historical it is possible K. may have drawn upon an incident in Persian history, but English literature contains many instances of loan words from foreign countries, especially proper nouns. Shakespeare, e.g., uses the expression "it out herods Herod," and as facilities for communication between one country and another increased words were apt to be borrowed so that today there can be hardly any country in the world which has not some of its words or phrases adopted by a neighbouring or more distant country. Examples could be given of words incorporated in our language from every country in Europe and from every quarter of the globe.

Prose or Poetry

It is easy enough to distinguish between the poetry of Homer or Horace and the prose of Thucydides or Livy, or between Macaulay's essays and his lays,

or Scott's novels and his ballads. With Hebrew it is not so easy as witness the diversity of opinions among critics concerning the contents of Ecc. One will say it is essentially prose (F.H.), another (T.L.) that it is all poetry, except four verses and a few introductory words like "I said in my heart," so also P.H. and V.Z. who both think the original book was metrical in form. H.E. calls it "a genuine poetic inspiration" and asserts that there is no where in the book mere prose, though he admits that certain passages are only in part poetical. J.N. too calls it mostly poetry, but of three different kinds—the later additions by other pens being in prose. On the other hand J.F.G. with whom G.A.B. agrees calls it essentially prose and T.K.C. calls the author "a thinker not a lyrist." C.D.G. talks of the book being "poetico-didactic" without the beautiful parallelism and rhythm of the poetry written in the golden age of Hebrew poetry. Bishop Lowth does not give any examples from Ecclesiastes to conform with what he regards as the characteristics of Hebrew poetry, and, while he seems undecided, appears to rank the book among prose writings. A.V.D. on the whole plumps for prose, but admits six or seven short passages are poetry.

After all to quote another writer, "the distinction between prose and poetry in the Old Testament is at times a thin one," and as the translators of R.V. in their preface say of the prophetic books of the Bible "the language though frequently marked by parallelism is, except in purely lyrical passages, rather of the nature of lofty and impassioned prose." So we must leave it at that: like nearly everything else about Ecc. all is debatable and each individual reader must make his own choice. In this version wherever poetry is probable it has been given the benefit of the doubt and has the

authority of some other translator. Very few are likely to agree with one extreme that not more than a few lines are prose, nor with the other extreme that it is almost all verse. Of a dozen authors whose commentaries have been carefully examined it is found that there is not a single chapter out of all the twelve which does not, according to one or other of them, contain some lines of poetry. The authors consulted were Barton, Bickell, Desvoeux, Ewald, Jastrow, Lewis, McFadyen, Moffatt, Montefiore, Powis Smith, Renan, and the American Jewish Translation. Roughly speaking we may be certain that at least a third of the book is verse.

The Dislocation Theory

The Dislocation Theory, as it is called, is too complicated to be discussed here at any length. But no book on Ecc. should omit a brief reference to it. J.G. van Palm in 1784 was the first to suggest the idea, and Gustav Bickell in 1884 to elaborate it; he found a keen supporter of it in E. J. Dillon, master of many languages, Eastern and European. The theory briefly is this: Through an accident, the details of which need not be gone into here, the MS. of the book became deranged and when put together again was still out of the proper order, what with this and well meaning additions by other writers to brighten K.'s gloomy outlook, the original book was quite obscured. The theory, though plausible, is somewhat complicated, and is not borne out by the LXX and other versions which do not differ in order from the Received Text. Moreover it is doubtful if the rolls had been superseded by the time Ecc. was written, though even so an accident might have been possible. T.K.C. thinks this theory of

dislocation deserves a respectful hearing, he has no theoretic objection to six of G.B.'s transpositions but adds that his stimulating book needs to be read with discrimination. Between van Palm and Bickell two other critics were of the opinion that there had been a transposition of the text, viz. F.U. and H.Grä.

Here and there throughout the Notes attention will be drawn to some of the supposed dislocations but for a complete list of them the reader must be referred to the works of F.U., G.B., T.K.C. and E.J.D.

ANCIENT VERSIONS

The principal Ancient Versions are the Gk., Syr., Lat. and Aramaic.

Greek

The Greek is commonly called the Septuagint or LXX. It is the oldest translation and was made when Hebrew was a living tongue, "its importance for textual criticism is great" said T.K.C., but adds that it is not much help in restoring the Hebrew. It does however enable us sometimes to correct errors which have befallen the Hebrew text and A.V.D. points out many such variations due to faulty Hebrew. He also draws attention to the fact that the order of words in LXX is almost exactly the same at the Hebrew—a sort of interlinear translation. T.P.D. follows the LXX against the Massoretic if he considers it makes better sense. Finally, as another example of how doctors differ, one critic will say that the LXX supports evidence that the Hebrew text is disordered and corrupt while a second declares that it does not bear out the accusation that the Received Text is corrupt. There are three other Greek versions of which only fragments are extant, viz. Aquila—

slavishly literal, The Theodotian—sometimes transliterations are substituted for translations, and Symmachus which gives the sense in idiomatic and elegant Greek rather than a literal translation.

Syriac

The Syriac or Peshita, the second oldest translation, is, according to C.D.G., “the best version which antiquity has produced.” It was made direct from the Hebrew and is preserved entire. It sometimes agrees with LXX and sometimes with Massoretic. According to H.O. “It is very literal, the best of the oldest versions direct from the Hebrew.” T.P.D. says it “stands midway between the LXX and Massoretic text.”

Latin

The Latin or Vulgate is “subordinate to LXX and Syr. St. Jerome is said to have translated Proverbs, Koheleth and Canticles in three days. It often reads more like a paraphrase than a translation.” (T.P.D.).

Aramaic

The Targum or Aramaic Version is of much later date, perhaps A.D. 600 according to C.D.G. and to others even as late as or later than A.D. 1000. It is more like a running commentary and can hardly be called a Version or even a paraphrase, much less a translation.

COMMENTATORS

As has been remarked already more than once, few books of the Bible can have provoked more divergent opinions among scholars than Koheleth. There is a vast number of authors who have contributed to the discussion from Christian commentators of the second

century A.D. and early Jewish Rabbis to the present day.

C.D.G. in his exhaustive examination of Ecclesiastes published in 1861 devotes 117 pages to what he calls a "sketch" of 145 different commentaries on Koheleth. Not counting the Book of Wisdom (which he regards as the first) or Midrashic literature on the subject, he devotes sixty one pages to twenty five Jewish expositions from Rashi's (A.D. 1040-1105) to Luzzatto's (1860), and 144 pages to Christian expositions from that of Bishop Gregory of Neocaesarea (A.D. 210-270) to C. Bridges's, E.H. Plumptre's and J. Ayre's (1860).

Since then many more contributors have swelled the total, some of whose names will be found mentioned on pages 24-27 of this book.

O.Z. in 1860 published a supplement to C.D.G.'s bibliography and gave 100 more names from 1529 up to 1815 to which T.L. added ten, which were not included in C.D.G.'s list, and also gave the titles of nine separate books dealing with Chap. 12 only, since when C.T.'s Dirge of Koheleth has appeared. None of the earlier Rabbis is included in his list.

Zedner's catalogue of Hebrew books in the British Museum also contains a number of Jewish commentaries up to 1867 which were not included in C.D.G.'s list, either because they had been overlooked, or had not been published before 1860, but, as F.D. points out, far from all. Indeed it would be beyond the capacity of any one to try to undertake the task of compiling a complete bibliography. As F.D. truly says: "it is not possible for any man to compass this literature."

Hardly any book of the Bible can have ever caused more controversy or less unanimity among commentators than this. Their self assurance (especially those of

the mid-Victorian era—not necessarily English) often makes them attack their senior critics with scant courtesy, only to be rebutted themselves with equal candour and scorn by their juniors a few years later.

However interesting it might be it would be tedious and outside the scope of this book to enumerate, still less to discuss, the merits of hundreds of commentators who have written books on Ecc. since its admission into the canon up to the present time. Some, including Saints Augustine and Jerome, with a more than usually vivid imagination, forced themselves to see cryptic allusions in various parts of the book to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Messiah, the Resurrection, and the Holy Trinity. One Commentator (D.K.), as late as 1823, startled students of the book by declaring that it was a satire in an unknown kind of Oriental poetry depicting in strict order (though in a veiled manner the lives of the kings of the house of David from Solomon to Zedekiah in chronological order. The arguments in support of his theory cannot be discussed here; they are as ingenious and curious as those of adherents to the Baconian Theory that Francis Bacon wrote the plays attributed to Shakespeare. An earlier commentator, Jacobi (1779), said it was "exclusively a guide for courtiers." But by no means are all of the earlier ones to be treated as curiosities, most of them expended their energies in trying to explain what the author's object was in writing the book or into how many divisions and sections it was divided, and to the task of interpretation. The later ones, of course, devoted much of their space to the question of its authorship, its integrity, date, and matter arising therefrom, as well as to textual criticism. In short the views expressed by these commentators are as varied as their nationalities,

and those who have the time to examine them must use each one his own discretion and make his own choice.

The following list is based on C.D.G.'s with additions brought up to 1950, but makes no pretence to being complete.

COMMENTATORS

(*Those with * before their names are Jewish. † Signifies translators only*)

A.D.

250	Gregory (Thaumaturgus)	1400	*Lipmann
360	Gregory (of Nyssa) Bp.	1500	*Aramah Isaac
330	Jerome	1528	Brentius, John
380	Philastrius (of Brescia) Bp.	1532	Luther, Martin
		1550	*Galicho, E.
		1550	*Alshech, M.
360	Ambrose (of Milan) Bp.	1556	Melancthon
400	Augustine Bp. of Hippo.	1580	Cartwright, Thomas
550	Diaconus Olympiodorus	1588	Whitaker, Wm.
780	Elias (of Crete)	1597	Lock, Henry
1040	*Rashi	1605	Broughton, Hugh
1085	*Rashbam	1605	Greenham, Richard
1100	*Ibn Ezra	1606	Lorinus, Joannis
1120	Hugo (of Paris)	1612	Piscator, Johannis
1130	Lombard, Peter	1620	de Pineda
1130	Richard (Paris)	1621	Ferdinand, John
1150	*Nathaniel	1621	Granger, Thomas
1170	*Mamonides	1627	Cornelius a Lapide
1250	Bonaventura	1628	Pemble, Wm.
1270	*Zohar	1630	*Loanz, E.
1300	*Caspi	1636	Cocceius
1300	Nicholas de Lyra	1639	Jermin, Michael
1330	*Penini	1643	Diodati, John
1400	*Mühlhausen	1644	Quarles, John
		1644	Grotius, H.
		1645	Reynolds (Bp. of Norwich)

1647	Geier, Martin	1770	*Mendelssohn, M.
1651	Mercer	1777	Kleuker
1653	Mayer, John	1778	Herder (of Yeard)
1654	Cotton, John	1779	Eichhorn
1655	Richardson, John	1779	Jacobi
1657	Leigh, Edward	1780	*Friedländer, D.
1658	Jackson, Arthur	1781	*Guernay, S.
1659	Gell, Robert	1784	Döderlein, J. C.
1660	Trapp, John	1784	Palm, J. van
1664	Jansenius, Cornelius	1785	Spohn, G. I.
1666	Smith, John	1787	Greenway
1683	Pool, Matthew	1791	*Hodgson, B.
1691	Schmidt, Sebastian	1792	Zirkel, G.
1694	Nisbet, Alexander	1793	Jahn
1700	Patrick (Bp.)	1794	Pfannkuche
1701	Yeard, F.	1794	Schmidt, J. E. C.
1703	Hamel	1795	Gaab, J. F.
1710	Henry, Matthew	1798	Nachtigal, J. C. C.
1718	Prior, Matthew	1802	Coke, T.
1720	Rambach	1804	Priestley
1720	*Landsberger, M,	1811	Reynolds, E.
1723	Wachter, G.	1813	Clarke, Adam
1726	Calmet	1818	Umbreit, F. W. C.
1727	Wells, Edward	1821	Wardlaw, R.
1729	Hardouin, J.	1822	Holden, G.
1729	Geier, M.	1823	Kaiser, D. G. P. C.
1731	le Clerc	1827	Henzius
1732	Bauer, C.F.	1828	Engelbreht, W. F.
1734	Hanssen, P.	1830	Rosenmüller, E. F. C.
1748	Gill	1830	*Heinemann
1749	Whiston, Wm.	1830	*Herzfeld, L.
1751	Michaelis, J. D.	1831	Köster, F. B.
1753	Lowth, R.	1836	Knobel, A.
1760	Desroux	1837	*Auerbach, S. H.
1765	Carmell, P.	1837	Ewald, G. H. A.
1768	Brodick	(1826)	
1770	Dodd	1838	Nordheimer, J.

- | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------|-------------------|
| 1840 | Stendel, J. C. F. | 1860 | Hahn, H. A. |
| 1840 | *Cahen, S. | 1860 | Hahn, H. D. |
| 1840 | *Dukes, L. | 1861 | Ginsburg, C. D. |
| 1842 | Patrick, Symon | 1861 | de Jong, P. |
| 1844 | de Wette, W. M. L. | 1862 | Davidson, S. |
| 1844 | Lisco, F. | 1862 | † Young, R. |
| 1845 | Preston, T. | 1864 | Kleinert, P. |
| 1845 | Hengstenberg | 1865 | Young, L. |
| 1846 | Noyes, G. R. | 1868 | Furst, J. |
| 1847 | Hitzig, F. | 1868 | Zöckler, O. } |
| 1848 | Heiligstedt, A. | 1872 | Lewis, T. |
| 1848 | Vaihinger, J. G. | 1870 | Schäfer, B. |
| 1848 | Barham, F. | 1871 | Graetz, H. |
| 1849 | Keil, C. F. | 1872 | Tyler, T. |
| 1850 | Stowe | 1872 | Bloch, J. S. |
| 1850 | Krochmal, N. | 1872 | Wordsworth, C. |
| 1850 | *Philippson, L. | 1874 | Taylor, C. |
| 1850 | *Rosenthal | 1875 | Kuenen, A. |
| 1851 | Hamilton, J. | 1879 | Perowne, J. J. S. |
| 1851 | Stuart, M. | 1880 | Kalisch, M. M. |
| 1854 | Kitto, J. | 1880 | Johnston, D. |
| 1854 | Bernstein, H. Q. | 1880 | Bullock, W. T. |
| 1855 | Elster, C. | 1880 | Derenbourg, T. |
| 1856 | Davidson, S. | 1881 | Plumptre, E. H. |
| 1856 | *Weiss, B. | 1882 | Renan, E. |
| 1856 | Macdonald, J. M. | 1882 | Strack, H. L. |
| 1856 | von Essen, L. | 1883 | Wright, C. H. H. |
| 1856 | Wangemann, G. | 1883 | Hitzig, F. |
| 1856 | Meier, E. | 1883 | Nowack, W. |
| 1859 | Hengstenberg,
E. W. H. | 1884 | Bickell, G. |
| 1859 | Buchanan, R. | 1886 | Palm, A. |
| 1860 | *Luzzatto, S. D. | 1886 | Pfleider, O. |
| 1860 | Bridges, C. | 1887 | Cheyne, T. K. |
| 1860 | Ayres, T. | 1888 | Friedländer, M. |
| 1860 | Horne, T. H. | 1890 | Euringer, S. |
| 1860 | Böhl, E. | 1890 | Lods, A. |
| | | 1890 | Cox, S. |

1890	Gietmann, G.	1922	Ebeling, E.
1890	Euringer, G.	1923	Dhorme, E.
1891	Leimdorfer, D.	1923	Thilo, E.
1894	Haupt, P.	1923	Hertzberg, H. W.
1895	Dillon, E. J.	1924	Montgomery, J.
1896	Ruetschi, R.	1925	Ranston, H.
1898	Wildeboer, G.	1925	Torczyner, H.
1898	Siegfried, C.	1925	†Moffatt, J.
1899	Tyler, T.	1925	Allgeier, A.
1902	Margoliouth, D. S.	1926	Kuhn, G.
1904	Genung, J. F.	1926	Meinhold, J.
1904	McNeile, A. H.	1926	Vizcher, V.
1904	Marshall, J. T.	1928	Bruce, W. S.
1904	Zapletal, V.	1929	Gemser, B.
1905	Cornill, C. H.	1929	Odeberg, H.
1906	†Forbush, W. B.	1932	Box, G. H.
1908	Martin, G. C.	1933	Zimmerli, W.
1908	Barton, G. A.	1934	Eichrodt, W.
1912	Podechard, E.	1935	Dornseiff, P.
1912	Levy, L.	1935	†Smith, J. M. P.
1914	Ehrlich, A. B.	1940	Galling, K.
1915	Pedersen, J.	1945	Gordis, R.
1916	Devine, M.	1946	{ Cohen, A. Reichert, V. E.
1919	Moulton, R. G.	1946	Pollock, S.
1919	Jastrow, M.	1948	Aalders, G. C.
1919	Leimbach, A.	1949	†Knox, R. A.
1920	Stave, E.	1949	†Hooke, S. H.
1921	Dimmler, E.	1950	*Ginsberg, H. L.
1921	Volz, P.	1950	Bea, A.
1921	Lindblom, J.	1950	Baumgartner, W.
1922	Williams, A. L.		
1922	†Burkitt, F. C.		

KOHELETH AND BEN SIRA

Much comparison has been made between Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus especially since the discovery

of large portions of the original Hebrew of the latter; the majority of commentators are confident that Ben Sira wrote his book after Koheleth, some, e.g. G.A.B., being so certain, that he says Schechter and Taylor *proved* that Ecclesiastes was known to Ben Sira and that "it is clearly *proved* by the evidence" that Ben Sira made use of Koheleth, and he then proceeds to give three "*proofs*" of Koheleth's priority and makes it "*clear*" that his work was known to Ben Sira. It is true that Schechter gives 367 examples from Ecclus. of phrases, idioms, etc. which bear a striking similarity with passages in O.T., of these only five from K. are given, but forty four from Proverbs, out of a total of over 400 verses which comprised the Cairo Geniza collection of Hebrew MSS in the University of Cambridge. In many commentaries there are to be found long lists of whole verses from Ben Sira and Koheleth which bear resemblance to one another. This may be so—but "*proof*" is rather a strong word. Even if Koheleth did live before Ben Sira may not both have borrowed from a common source? It would be easy to accuse X. in his commentary on Ecclesiastes of having borrowed from Y's notes, whereas both may have copied from Z's, or all three might have had the same (perhaps very obvious) idea, quite independently. Still, who knows which would come out worse in cross examination if accused of plagiarism? Not only are whole sentences to all intents and purposes the same in both books but many grammatical and other peculiarities in the Hebrew portions of Ecclesiasticus are also identical. These are too technical to discuss in a book of this sort, but for those who are sufficiently interested in the similarities between these two books and also Proverbs, to take the trouble to look them up, the lists on the next page may be useful. Others

	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>	<i>Ecclesiasticus</i>	<i>Proverbs</i>
I.	4 7 f 5 18	14.18 c,d 40.11 b 39.17 c,d 21.12 b	30.15 f; 27.20
II.	23 24 26	40.1 14.14	13.22 b; 28.8
III.	1 7 b 11 14	4.20 a 20.5 ff 39.33 b 18.6; 42.21 c	
IV.	2 5 6 8 14	41.9 f; 11.28 14.3 b, 5 b 11.5	6.10 b; 24.33 17.1
V.	1 1 f 2 3 ff 4 f 12 18	7 7.14 18.22 f 18.22 31.1 14.14	20.25 15.8; 21.27
VI.	2 7	30.18	16.26
VII.	1		22.1
VIII.	1	13.25	
X.	2	21.26	
XI.	8 7 12	27.26 11.5	7.15; 26.27 21.20
XII.	7	40.11 a	

have made much longer ones, but many of these so called similarities are hard to see, or else are grammatical likenesses in the form of the Hebrew or in phraseology. Among commentators who are the strongest supporters of K.'s seniority may be mentioned A.H.M., A.L.W. and C.H.W.

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

At this point a brief word may be said about the Apocryphal Book of Wisdom, which C.D.G. regards as the first commentary ever written on Ecc., but the reader must test this opinion for himself by comparing the two books. He will find, especially in Chapters II and III of Wisdom, the author of that book taking up arms against Koheleth and flatly contradicting many of his statements. Very few commentators will be found who disagree with C.D.G., but F.H. is an exception as he considers Wisdom is earlier in date than Ecc. and therefore could not be a condemnation of it.

MARCUS AURELIUS

There are two authors of whom Koheleth often puts us in mind. One is Marcus Aurelius the Roman Emperor of the second century A.D. whose Meditations are so deservedly popular, but there are marked differences between the two. Marcus Aurelius was certainly no pessimist, but some things they had in common. Marcus Aurelius is at one with K. in believing the eternal repetition of life throughout the ages and the oblivion into which man sinks when he is dead, but unlike K. he does not recommend the "carpe diem" of Horace, rather he urges his readers to accept the inevitable but be just and sincere, and cheerfully embrace whatever happens, bravely accepting death when your turn comes.

OMAR KHAYYAM

The other is Omar Khayyam (a Persian poet of the eleventh century A.D.) some of whose Rubaiyat were translated or rather paraphrased by Edward FitzGerald and published anonymously in 1859. W. B. Forbush in 1906 actually translated the whole of Koheleth in the well-known metre of Omar Khayyam. F.C.B. began and privately printed in 1918 a translation of a large part of Ecc. in FitzGerald metre and style, and in 1922 about two-thirds or 141 verses were issued to the public. There is certainly a general likeness between K. and O.K. for each was sceptical about the mysteries of life and puzzled by the same old problems which had puzzled many before and will go on puzzling others till we cease "to see through a glass darkly." Each advocated the principle of filling the cup "before Life's liquid in the cup is dry." Each "evermore came out by the same door as in they went," "a door to which they found no key" and each was obscured by "a veil past which they could not see," and neither satisfactorily succeeded in solving the problem they set out to solve, viz. "to grasp the sorry scheme of things entire." There are however many more similarities to be found between these two authors, if one has Heron-Allen's edition to consult for after all FitzGerald's edition was a paraphrase rather than a translation and many of his quatrains owe their inspiration to the fusion of two or more in the original. Some of Heron-Allen's literal translations of rubaiyat not to be found in FitzGerald's paraphrase are quoted in their appropriate places.

There is yet another similarity between the two authors. At a dinner of the Omar Khayyam Club the late Sir Edmund Gosse once read or recited a short

poem he had composed for the occasion, which ended with the two lines:

“Also he charms to this extent
We don’t know always what he meant.”

They would have been equally applicable to K. For this reason F.C.B. gives up any attempt to translate 4^{13f} and 5⁹.

THEOGNIS AND HORACE

Two other authors may also be mentioned in passing: Theognis, the Greek Elegiac poet (circ. 600–550 B.C.) whose works contained a good deal of every day philosophy, and, according to H.R., may have been the main source of K.’s foreign aphorisms; and Horace the lyric poet of Rome (circ. 60 B.C.) always seeking after truth.

EMENDATIONS AND CANONICITY

Two matters which most commentators discuss in their Introductions can be dismissed here in a few words, for they are of small importance as far as the book itself is concerned. Plenty of emendations have been suggested, but few, except some obvious slips on the part of the scribe, seem to be necessary. Attention is drawn to these few in the Notes, and secondly, canonicity, about which all that need be said here is that as usual where this Book is concerned controversy prevailed, more particularly between the schools of Hillel and Shammai, till at last the former won the day. There is little doubt had not the idea been firmly implanted in the minds of most people in the past that Solomon was the author, the Book would at best have been relegated to the Apocrypha.

TRANSLATION

TITLE

1	The words of the Preacher, the son of David, King in Jerusalem.	CHAP. I
---	--	------------

THE FUTILITY OF LIFE

- 2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher:
Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
- 3 What advantage hath a man of all his labour
Which he laboureth under the sun?

THE ETERNAL CIRCLE

- 4 Generation goeth and generation cometh;
But the earth for ever standeth.
- 5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down,
And hasteth to its place where it arose.
- 6 The wind goeth to the south,
And circleth to the north;
Circling, circling goeth the wind,
And to its circlings it starteth back.
- 7 All the wadys go into the sea,
Yet the sea is not full;
Unto the place whither the wadys go,
Thither they continually return.
- 8 All speech is wearisome;
Man cannot speak it.
Is not the eye sated with sights,
And the ear saturated with sounds?
- 9 That which hath been is that which shall be,
And that which hath been done is that which shall
be done;
And there is nothing completely new under the sun.

- 10 Is there anything whereof it may be said:
“Lo! this surely is new?”
Already it hath been from eternity before us.
- 11 There is no remembrance of former things
And there shall be no remembrance of future things
after us.

KOHELETH'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- 12 I, the Preacher, was King over Israel in
13 Jerusalem, and I made up my mind to investigate
and explore, through wisdom, everything which is
done under the heavens. That is a bad business
14 which God hath given to mankind with which to
busy themselves. I have studied all the works
that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is
vanity and vexation of spirit.
- 15 The bent cannot be straightened,
And the missing cannot be counted.
- 16 I thought to myself: Lo, I have become great
and have increased in wisdom above all who were
17 before me over Jerusalem, since I had studied
much wisdom and knowledge, so I determined
to know not only wisdom and knowledge, but
madness and folly. This also I knew was vexation
of spirit, for
- 18 In much wisdom is much suffering.
And increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow.

- CHAP. I Said I to myself:
II “Come now I will test thee with mirth and enjoy
good.”
And behold this also was vanity.

- 2 I said of laughter "it is madness"
And of mirth: "What hath it wrought?"
- 3 I tried exciting my appetite with wine (but
behaving reasonably) and fastening on folly, until
I should discover what was right for mankind to
4 do on earth during their brief lifetime. I made me
great works, I built for myself houses and planted
5 vineyards for myself. I made for myself gardens
and orchards, and I planted in them fruit trees of
6 all sorts. I made for myself pools of water to
irrigate therefrom the thicket of sprouting trees.
7 I acquired servants and concubines, and house
born slaves for myself; also I acquired more
herds and flocks than any others who were in
8 Jerusalem before me. I collected also silver and
gold and royal as well as provincial property. I
obtained for myself men and women singers and
9 human luxuries—many mistresses. Thus I became
great and increased more than all who were
before me in Jerusalem; moreover wisdom was
10 my stand-by. And everything on which I cast
my eyes I withheld not from them, nor did I
restrain my heart's desire from all my joy, for
it rejoiced as the result of all my labours, and
11 this was my share of them, for can he who
succeedeth a King do more than what hath already
been done?
- 11 Then I turned my attention to all the works I
had done and to the labour I had laboured to do
them and, behold, all was vanity and vexation
of spirit, and there was no advantage under the
12 sun, so I turned my attention to wisdom and
madness and folly, and I saw that wisdom hath the
advantage over folly as light hath over darkness.

- 14 The wise man's eyes are in his head,
But the fool walketh in darkness
 And I myself knew also that one hap happeneth
 to them all
- 15 And I said to myself: As it happeneth to the
fool, so it will happen even to me, so why was I
then more wise? So I said to myself: "this also is
16 vanity, for there is no more remembrance of the
wise than of the fool, seeing that in the days to
17 come all will already be forgotten, and the wise
die even as the fool"; so I was disgusted with life
because the work wrought under the sun seemed
wrong to me; for all is vanity and vexation of
18 spirit." And I hated the labour with which I my-
self had laboured under the sun, because I should
19 have to leave it to my successor. And who knoweth
whether he will be wise or foolish? Yet shall he
have the mastery over all my labour wherein
I have shewn myself wise under the sun—this
20 also is vanity. Therefore I began to despair of
all the labour which I laboured under the sun.
21 For should there be a man who laboureth wisely,
knowledgeably and successfully, yet to a man, who
hath not laboured for it, he will have to leave his
22 fortune as a legacy. This also is vanity and a great
wrong. For what hath a man of all his labour and
vexation which he laboureth under the sun? For
23 all his days are painful and his business pro-
voking, even at night he findeth no rest. This
24 also is vanity. There is nothing better for a man
that he should eat and drink and that he should
enjoy himself in his labour. This also I saw was
from the hand of God. For who should eat and
25 who enjoy if not I? For to a man who is good in
26

His sight He giveth wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner He giveth the business to store and collect for one whom God approveth. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----|
| 1 | For everything a season and for every purpose a time. | CHAP. | |
| 2 | A time to be born, | And a time to die, | III |
| | A time to plant, | A time to pluck. | |
| 3 | A time to slay, | And a time to heal, | |
| | A time to breach, | And a time to build. | |
| 4 | A time to weep, | And a time to laugh, | |
| | A time to mourn, | And a time to dance. | |
| 5 | A time to scatter stones, | And a time to pick up
stones, | |
| | A time to receive with
open arms, | And a time to hold at
arm's length. | |
| 6 | A time to seek, | And a time to lose, | |
| | A time to keep, | And a time to scatter. | |
| 7 | A time to tear, | A time to sew, | |
| | A time to be silent. | A time to speak. | |
| 8 | A time to love, | A time to hate, | |
| | A time for war, | A time for peace. | |

LIFE'S PROBLEM

- 9 What advantage hath a worker in what he
 10 laboureth? I have seen the business which God
 11 hath given to mankind with which to busy himself.
 Everything he hath made is fitting at the time; he
 12 hath given ignorance to them so that no man can
 fathom the work which God worketh from first to
 13 last. I know there is nothing better for them than
 to rejoice and fare well during life, and if every
 man eateth and drinketh and enjoyeth the good

14 of all his labour—that is the gift of God. I know that whatever God doeth it shall be for ever: nothing can be added to it, nor anything diminished from it, and God doeth it that man shall fear Him. Whatever is hath already been and whatever is to be hath already been and God seeketh them that are persecuted.

MAN OR BEAST

16 And again I saw under the sun in the place of judgment that wickedness was there and in the place of righteousness that wickedness was there.
 17 I said to myself: “the righteous and the wicked shall God judge, for there is a time for every purpose and for every work.” I said to myself with regard to the sons of man: “God hath exposed them so that they might see for themselves that they are like beasts.” For that which happeneth to man happeneth to the beast; even one thing happeneth to them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other and they all have one spirit: so man hath no advantage over the beast, for all is vanity.
 18 20 All go to one place; all are of the dust, and all return to the dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man whether it ascendeth on high, and the spirit of the beast whether it descendeth below? Wherefore I see that there is nothing better than that man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his share: for who can prove to him what shall be after him?

CHAP. I
IV

So again I considered all the oppressions that are under the sun, and—behold!—the tears of the oppressed who had no sympathiser and the

oppressors had power on their side, but they too
 2 had no sympathiser. Wherefore I applauded the
 dead who are already dead more than the living
 3 who are yet alive and better than both is he who
 hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil
 deeds done under the sun.

THE VANITY OF ENVY

4 And I saw it was because of all his labour and
 all his successful work that a man is envied of his
 neighbour. This also is vanity and vexation of
 spirit.
 5 The fool foldeth his hands
 And wasteth away [saying:]
 6 "Better one palm full of restfulness
 Than two fists full of labour and vexation of
 spirit."

TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE

7 And again I considered and saw vanity under
 8 the sun. There is one without a second, who hath
 neither son nor brother, but no end to all his
 labour, and riches do not satisfy him—"For
 whom do I labour and stint myself?" This also is
 9 vanity and a bad business. Two are better than
 one, because they have a better result from their
 10 labour. If one fall the one will lift up his fellow,
 but woe to him—the one that falleth and hath
 11 none to lift him up. Again if two huddle together
 12 they get warm, but how can one be warm? Also
 if one overpower him, two would have withstood
 him, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

EVANESCENCE OF POPULARITY

- 13 Better a homely youth and a wise one than an old king and a stupid one, who no longer knoweth how to be warned. For from the house of bondage he cometh out to be king, although in his own station he had been born poor. I saw all the living who walk under the sun were with the second youth who was to stand up in his stead.
- 14 There was no end of all the people whom he led; but they that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

SUNDRY MAXIMS CONCERNING GOD

- CHAP. I Watch thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they do not realise they do wrong.
- v Be not rash with thy mouth nor quick to utter anything before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few. Moreover:
- 2 "Dreams come through much business
And a fool's voice through many words."
- 3 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in fools—that which thou hast vowed, pay. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst
- 5 vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the angel that it was an "error"; wherefore should God be wrath at thy voice and ruin thy work of thine hands? for:
- 6 7 "Through the multitude of dreams and vanities
There are many words, but fear thou God."

- 8 If thou seest the oppression of the poor and perversions of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter for He that is higher than the highest watcheth and there be higher
9 than they. But the advantage to land generally is a king devoted to the soil.

WEALTH'S DISAPPOINTMENTS

- 10 He that loveth silver will never be satiated with it, nor he that loveth opulence with increase—this
11 also is vanity. When goods multiply they that enjoy them multiply. What benefit is that to owners thereof save the beholding of them with
12 their eyes? The sleep of the labourer is sweet, whether he eat little or much, but the satiety of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. There
13 is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun—riches kept for the owner thereof for his hurt,
14 and should those riches perish through bad business, and he beget a son then there is nothing
15 for him; as he was brought forth out of his mother's womb naked shall he return to go as he
16 came and shall take nothing of his labour with him. And this also is a grievous evil that in all
17 points as he came, so shall he go, and what advantage hath he that hath laboured for the wind? All his days he ate in darkness and he had much suffering and sickness and exasperation.

SEIZE THE PLEASURES OF THE PRESENT DAY

- 18 Behold from what I have seen it is good and fitting for a man to eat and to drink and to see good in all his labour wherein he laboureth under the sun all the days of the tale of his life which God

- 19 hath given him (for this is his share). To every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth he hath empowered to eat thereof and drink and receive his share thereof and to take pleasure in his labour—this is a gift from God.
- 20 Then he will not give much thought to the days of his life, since God keepeth him occupied with his life's pleasure.

THE WORTHLESSNESS OF RICHES

CHAP. VI 1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun
 2 and it is common among mankind. A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth and honour so that he wanteth nothing for himself of all that he desireth, but God doth not empower him to partake thereof, but a stranger partaketh of it,
 3 this is vanity and a sore sickness. If a man beget a hundred, and live many years, however many the days of his years may be, yet if he is not sated with goodness and moreover hath no burial I say a still-born baby is better than he, for
 4 it cometh in vanity and in darkness doth it go, and in darkness is its name obscured, moreover the sun it hath never seen nor known,
 5 yet it hath more rest than the other. Even should he live a million years and see no good—do not
 6 both go to the same place? All the labour of mankind is for his mouth. And yet the appetite
 7 is not filled. For what advantage hath the wise man over the fool, or the poor man who knoweth
 8 how to behave before his fellow? Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the soul.
 9 This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

THE UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE

- 10 Whatsoever is hath already been named and
11 what man is hath been known and he cannot con-
tend with him that is more powerful than he. As
12 there are many things that increase vanity, what is
man the better? For who knoweth what is good for
man in this life—the tale of his vain life which he
spendeth like a shadow; who can tell a man what
shall be after him under the sun?

THE BETTER LIFE

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| 1 | Better is a good name than good ointment. | CHAP.
VII |
| | And the day of death than the day of birth. | |
| 2 | Better it is to go to the house of mourning than to
go to the house of feasting.
For that is the end of all men. And the living will
lay it to heart. | |
| 3 | Better is sorrow than laughter.
For sadness of countenance maketh the heart feel
better. | |
| 4 | The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
And the heart of fools in the house of mirth. | |
| 5 | Better is it to hear the rebuke of the wise
Than for a man to hear the song of fools. | |
| 6 | For as the crackling of thorns under a pot
So is the laughter of the fool
This also is vanity | |
| 7 | For oppression maddeneth a wise man
And a bribe breaketh the heart. | |
| 8 | Better is the end of a thing
Than its beginning.
Better is the patient in spirit than the proud in
spirit. | |

MAXIMS

- 9 Be not rashly resentful in thy spirit
 For resentfulness resteth in the breasts of fools.
- 10 Say not "wherein were the former days better than
 these?"
 For thou enquirest concerning this unwisely.
- 11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance
 And an advantage to them that see the sun.
- 12 For wisdom is a protection as money is a protection
 And the knowledge of wisdom is an advantage.
 Wisdom enliventh him who possessth it.
- 13 Meditate on the work of God
 For who can straighten things which he hath bent?
- 14 In goodly days be good
 And in the day of mischief meditate.
 Even this and that hath God ordained
 So that mankind will fathom nothing about his future.

AVOID EXTREMES

- 15 These two have I seen in the days of my vanity
 There is a righteous man who perisheth in his
 righteousness
 And there is a wicked man who surviveth in his evil
 doing.
- 16 Be not excessively righteous, neither make thyself
 over wise,
 Why should'st thou ostracize thyself?
- 17 Be not excessively wicked, neither be thou foolish
 Why should'st thou die before thy time?
- 18 It is good that thou should catch hold of this,
 And not withhold thine hand from that,
 For he that feareth God
 Will come out of them both.

MORE MAXIMS

- 19 Wisdom fortifieth the wise,
More than many masters in the city.
- 20 There is not a righteous man on earth
Who doeth good and sinneth not.
- 21 Also to all the tittle tattle talked pay no attention
For may be thou wilt hear thy servant revile thee;
- 22 For oft times thy conscience telleth thee
That thou thyself hast reviled others.
- 23 All this I proved by wisdom;
I said I will be wise, but it was far from me.

A DIGRESSION ON WOMEN

- 24 Far off indeed is that which hath been and
25 exceeding deep. Who can fathom it? I determined
to know and to explore and to seek out wisdom and
reason; And to know that wickedness is folly and
folly is madness. But I find more bitter than death
the woman who is snares and her heart nets her
hands bonds; he who is good before God shall be
27 rescued from her, but the sinner will be taken by
her. Lo, this I have found out, saith the Preacher,
taking one thing with another, to find out the reason
28 which yet my soul seeketh but hath not found,
one person out of a thousand I found, but a
29 woman out of all these I did not find. Lo only
this I have found that God made man upright but
they sought out many counter-plots.

MORE MAXIMS

- 1 Who is like the wise man
And who knoweth the explanation of anything?
The wisdom of a wise man lighteth up his face

CHAP.
VIII

And the hardness of his face is changed.

2 Keep the king's command, and especially
3 because of the oath of God, be not hasty to go out of
4 his presence; stand not on an evil thing, for he doeth
what so ever pleaseth him. For the word of the
king is masterful and who dare say to him "What
doest thou?"

5 Whoso keepeth the commandment shall know no
evil thing

And the heart of the wise knoweth there is a time of
judgment.

6 For there is a time for every purpose and a
judgment, because the misfortune of mankind is
7 great upon him for he knoweth not what will be,
because who will tell him when it will come to pass?
8 No man hath mastery over the wind to restrain the
wind and none hath mastery in the day of death, as
9 none can be released in war. Neither can wicked-
ness rescue the owners. All this I have seen and
applied my heart to all the works which are
worked under the sun. Sometimes a man has
mastery over men to his hurt.

10 And so I saw the wicked buried who had come
and gone from the place of the holy, and they were
forgotten in the city where they had so done.

11 This also is vanity. Because sentence against an
evil deed is not quickly done, the heart of mankind
12 is overflowing to do evil; even though a sinner
doeth evil a hundred times and yet surviveth,
13 still I know it will be good for them who fear God,
who fear before him and that it shall not be good
for the wicked and that he shall not lengthen days
like a shadow, because he feareth not before God.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon earth

—namely there are righteous men to whom it happeneth as the deeds of the wicked, and there are wicked men to whom it happeneth as the deeds of the righteous. I said this also is vanity. So I applauded merry making because there is no good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry, and that will accompany him in the laborious days of his life which God giveth him under the sun.

THE UNFATHOMABLE

16 When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business which is done upon the earth—
17 how one cannot sleep by day or night, I saw that it is all the work of God that mankind cannot find out the work which is worked under the sun because though mankind labour to seek yet he cannot find it out and though the wise say he knoweth it he cannot find it out.

DEATH COMES TO ALL

1 For all this I determined to explain everything: CHAP.
that the righteous and the wise with their actions are IX
in the hand of God, love and hatred man knoweth
2 not, all in front of them is vanity. Inasmuch as there is one fate for all, to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the bad, to the clean and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not, as is the good so is the sinner, he that sweareth is as he that feareth an oath. This evil of all which is done under the sun is that there is one fate for all, and therefore the heart of the sons of Adam is full of evil, and

madness is in their heart in their life time, and
 4 their end is with the dead! For to him who is
 5 joined to all the living there is hope, for a live dog
 6 is better off than the dead lion. For the living
 know that they must die but the dead know nought,
 neither have they any more reward, for the memory
 of them is forgotten. Also their love, as well as
 their hatred, and also their envy is long ago
 perished and there is for them never any more for
 ever a portion in all which has been done under
 the sun.

THE PRESENT HOUR ALONE IS MAN'S

- 7 Go thy way, eat thy food with joy,
 And drink thy wine in good heart,
 For God hath already accepted thy works;
 At all times let thy garments be white,
 8 And oil upon thine head never lack.
 9 Enjoy life with a woman thou lovest
 All the days of the life of thy vanity
 Which God giveth thee under the sun,
 For this is thy share in life and thy labour
 Wherein thou labourest under the sun.
 10 Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with
 thy might, for there is no thing, no plan, no know-
 ledge, no wisdom in Sheol whither thou goest.

TIME AND CHANCE

- 11 Again I considered that under the sun the
 race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,
 nor food to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent,
 nor favour to the learned, but time and chance

- 12 happeneth to them all. For mankind knoweth not his time, as fishes are caught in the evil snare, and birds caught in the gin, so are the sons of mankind entrapped in an evil time when it falleth suddenly upon them.

UNAPPRECIATED WISDOM

- 13 Also this I have seen under the sun and it impressed me much. There was a little city and few men within it and there came unto it a great king and surrounded it and built great siege works, 14 and there was found in it a homely wise man and he rescued the city through his wisdom, but no one remembered that same homely man, and I said, 15 wisdom is better than valour, but the wisdom of 16 the homely one is despised and his words not listened to.

WISDOM AND FOLLY

- 17 The words of the wise listened to quietly
Are better than the clamour of a master fool.
18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war
But one sinner nullifieth much good.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY

- 1 Dead flies cause the ointment of the perfumer to CHAP.
stink and ferment. x
More weighty than wisdom or honour is a little folly.
2 The heart of the wise is on his right,
But the heart of a fool on his left.
3 And even when walking on the road the fool's sense
is wanting,
And he saith to all he is a fool.

- 4 If the spirit of a ruler rise up against thee leave not thy place,
For soothing quelleth great mistakes.
- 5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun,
Like an error coming from a master.
- 6 Folly is set in very high places,
And the rich sit in low places.
- 7 I have seen servants upon horses,
And princes walking as servants on the ground.
- 8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it,
And he that breaketh a fence, a serpent shall sting him.
- 9 He that quarrieth stones shall be hurt by them,
And he that splitteth wood shall be endangered by them.
- 10 If the axe be blunt, because the edge is unwhetted,
More force is needed, but common sense can prevent this.
- 11 If the serpent strike before the spell,
Then futile is the charmer's skill.
- 12 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious,
But the lips of a fool will devour him.
- 13 The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness,
And the aftermath of his mouth is mischievous madness.
- 14 Also the fool multiplieth words;
Mankind knoweth not what is to be,
And that which shall be after him
Who can tell him?
- 15 The labour of fools wearieth them,
He knoweth not how to go to the city.
- 16 Woe to thee, O Land, when thy king is a youth,
And thy princes feast in the morning.
- 17 Happy art thou, O Land, when thy king is a free man,

- And thy princes feast in moderation and not to excess.
- 19 A meal is made for mirth,
And wine for merriment,
And money payeth for the lot.
- 18 By slothfulness the beam-work droppeth,
And through slack hands the house drippeth.
- 20 Even in thy repose revile not the king,
And in thy bed chamber revile not the rich;
For a bird of the air shall carry the sound,
And a lord of the wings telleth the tale.

- 1 Cast thy bread upon the waters, CHAP.
xi
For thou shalt find it after many days.
- 2 Give a portion to seven, and also to eight;
For thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth;
- 3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth:
And if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north,
In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.
- 4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow;
And he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.
- 5 As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit,
With the babe in the pregnant womb,
Even so thou knowest not the works of God who worketh all.
- 6 In the morning sow thy seed,
And till the evening withhold not thine hand:
For thou knowest not whether shall prosper,
Either this or that, or whether they shall both be alike good.

- 7 Truly the light is sweet
 And it is good for the eyes to behold the sun:
 8 But if a man live many years and rejoice in them all;
 Yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they
 shall be many.
 All that cometh is vanity.

ENJOYMENT OF YOUTH

- 9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth,
 And let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy
 manhood;
 And walk in the ways of thine heart—
 And in the sight of thine eyes:
 But know that for all these things God will bring
 thee into judgment.
 10 Therefore remove sorrow from thine heart—and
 put away evil from thy flesh:
 For childhood and youth are vanity.

CHAP. THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH

XII

ERE

- 1 the evil days come
 And the years draw nigh
 When thou shalt say:
 “I have no pleasure in them.”

ERE

- 2 the sun, or the light or the moon,
 or the stars be darkened,
 or the clouds return after the rain:
 3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall
 tremble,
 And the strong men shall become bent,

- And the grinders cease because they are few,
And those that look out of the windows be darkened.
- 4 And shut are the doors in the street,
As the sound of the grinding halteth,
And the sound of the bird is startling
When the daughters of music are hushed,
- 5 And they are scared by that which is high,
And by footfalls that lurk in the roadway,
And the almond tree flourisheth
And the grasshopper is a burden,
And desire faileth,
Because man goeth to his eternal home
And the mourners go about the streets.
- ERE
- 6 The silver cord be loosened,
Or the golden bowl be shattered,
Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain,
Or the wheel shattered at the well,
- 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was,
And the spirit shall return to God who gave it.

EPILOGUE

8 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is
9 vanity. And moreover, because the Preacher was
10 wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he
11 gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order
many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out
acceptable words: and that which was written was
12 upright, even words of truth. The words of the
wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the
masters of assemblies, which are given from one
shepherd. And, beyond this, my son be warned:
of making many books there is no end; and much
study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 LAST WORD OF ALL

14 Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or bad.

NOTES

CHAPTER I

1. *The words of.* V.E.R. quotes Rashi, who said that the same phrase “the words of” is used in Amos and Jeremiah whose messages consist of chiding and rebuke, whereas in all the minor prophets (except Amos) and in Isaiah the phrase used is “The Word of the Lord.”

the Preacher (*see Glossary*). The A.V. translation is retained in the text of this version, but in the notes he is referred to as Koheleth, a transliteration of the Hebrew. For further remarks on the word *see* Introduction.

the son of David. Even if the whole of this verse is not an addition to the original, these words probably are.

King in Jerusalem. Ludwig Levy (quoted by A.L.W.) thought K. used the word in the stoic sense of a wise man being king. Omar Khayyam was known in his own country as “the King of the Wise.” Plutarch tells a story of Parrhasius, a Greek painter in the fifth century, who called himself King of Painters, and wore a purple robe and a golden crown.

The A.V. of is a mis-translation for *in, at or over*. As well call H.M. King of London. King may apply to David or Koheleth. If the latter, perhaps the author may have used the word in a figurative sense just as Beau Nash was called the “King” of Bath because he led the fashion there for so long. In the East the head of a school was sometimes called a King.

2. *Vanity of Vanities* (*see Glossary*).
3. This verse is cited as an example of Greek influence, but the thought is found in other languages.
advantage (*see Glossary*).
of all his labour (*see Glossary*). H.D.H. translates “in spite of . . . ”
under the sun. (*see Glossary*).

- CHAP. I 4. T.K.C. calls this and the next four verses "the gem of the book." The translation of this verse here is more literal than that of A.V.
- generation.* H.R. thinks this may mean age or acon more than just a generation, cf. Eccl. 14¹⁸.
- goeth . . . cometh.* These two words are very similar and often interchangeable in A.V. The word translated "go" means primarily to walk or march and throughout the O.T. is translated by A.V. in many different ways; that translated "come" has also a large number of English equivalents in A.V. Roughly speaking it means to "come in" or "abide" while the other means to "go on."
- the earth for ever standeth.* At least three different constructions are put upon these words. (F.H., F.D., and H.Grä.), but there seems no reason why the words do not mean exactly what they say, bearing in mind the elasticity of the word "ever." (See Glossary.)
5. *ariseth.* The Hebrew of this word is always used in connection with the sun, or light, or majesty, except once (2 Chr. 26¹⁰) where it was leprosy which broke out, but even then it was on a king's forehead. In Hebrew the sun goes out when it rises and comes in when it sets, just the opposite of our English idiom.
- hasteth.* The Hebrew of this word can mean to swallow up, snuff, gape, or pant. Cf. Is. 42⁴, Job 7², Ps. 119¹³¹. Several different commentators would translate this line in different ways and many of them prefer pant i.e., as F.D. points out, panting after, not from fatigue; Virgil in his Georgics compares the rising sun to panting steeds, but as the sense is the same there is no need to wander from the text to the margin of A.V. and moreover it is a poetic license to say that the sun "pants."
6. *Circling.* There is considerable assonance in the original. LXX, Targ., Syr., Vulg. and some commentators (H.Grä. and M.G.) take the sun, not the wind, to be the subject of this verb.
7. *wadys.* The word for this in Hebrew does not mean a

river so much as a torrent (so LXX) running through a CHAP.
narrow valley—a copious stream in the rainy season and a
mere thread of water, if that, in the dry season.

8. *speech*. This could be translated *words* as LXX and Syr., Targ. and some commentators, e.g. W.G., or *things*, as Vulg. and C.H.W., H.Grä., F.D. and J.S.P. (See Glossary).

wearisome. So some authorities but by no means all. The majority prefer “wearied,” which does not fit in with “speech” and the better and more grammatical translation would then be “all things are full of weariness.” J.S.P says “All things are weary” is a true interpretation of these words, i.e. made weary by labour and fatigue, not “it is wearisome to utter the whole tale,” but cf. 2 S. 17² and Job 20¹⁸. A.V.D. translates “all these considerations are tiresome.”

9. *that which hath been*. LXX, Vulg., Arab and others render interrogatively “What is that . . . ?” The phrase is indicative of a late period, cf. 3¹⁵.

completely new. The Hebrew is more emphatic than A.V. for it inserts the word “all” before “new” and could be translated wholly, whatever, entirely, or absolutely new, perhaps equivalent to our “brand new,” but authorities doubt whether “all” can be used adverbially or intensively like this. The usual meaning for the expression “nothing all” is simply “nothing.” G.A.B. calls it a universal negative.

Is there . . . before us. As more in keeping with Hebrew idiom, others prefer to translate “if there is . . . it has, etc.” An Akkadian proverb says “The life of the day before yesterday is that of any day.”

10. Cf. the Zulu proverb: “What has once occurred will occur again” and Marcus Aurelius: “He, who sees what now is, hath seen all that ever hath been from times everlasting, and that shall be to eternity.” The same thought is repeated constantly throughout his meditations, e.g. 2¹⁴, 4³², 7¹, 4⁹ and 10²⁷. E.J.D. suspects Buddhistic influence

in this verse. There is too a recently propounded theory that science cannot discover anything really new, but only elaborates, with its refined methods of technique, thoughts which are age-old possessions of mankind (Schwarz), and that many of those most challenging theories can be found anticipated in old Jewish writings and elsewhere.

Is there anything . . . ? A favourite way of expressing a negative was to ask a question expecting the answer "no." Koheleth uses this method many times throughout his book (*see Index*). We often do the same in English, e.g. "Who ever heard of such a thing?" As more in keeping with Hebrew idiom, others it should be pointed out, prefer to translate "if there is . . . it has, etc."

Already, or long since. A characteristic Aramaic particle so also 2¹², 16, 3¹⁵, 4³, 6⁸, but T.L. denies this and refers to Gen. 35¹⁶.

eternity (*see Glossary under EVERLASTING*).

11. *no remembrance*, i.e. according to H.O. no active memory which enables a new generation to profit from the experiences and teaching of previous generations. Ehrlich says it does not mean historical record. Probably the sense is there is no memory of persons who have gone before; nor, with regard to those who come after, will there be any memory of them in the minds of their successors. (S.H.H. and Ors.).
12. *I was king*. Some would translate "became" others "have been." This hardly seems an argument for, or even against, Solomonic origin. If Koheleth was pretending to be Solomon he would not hesitate to say that the biographer was king over Israel in Jerusalem. H.Grä. thought that Herod the Great is portrayed here!
13. *made up my mind*, lit. "gave to my heart" a favourite late Biblical Hebrew idiom which S.R.D. says is a strong indication of the late date of the book, cf. v. 17, 8⁹ etc. It has equivalents in English such as to "concentrate" or, as here, "make up one's mind." (*See Glossary under HEART*.)

explore. The Hebrew word for this means rather more than CHAP.
to search out—to spy out, cf. Nu. 13², 16¹ turn over,¹
explore, probe.

business...busied. Each of these words in Hebrew comes from an Aramaic loan word, meaning to be occupied or busied with. There are two other roots in Hebrew which are homonyms, i.e. separate words that happen to be identical in form but different in meaning, and these mean respectively to "answer" (10¹⁰) and to "afflict" (6⁸). The latter word would fit in very suitably here. (See Glossary).

through wisdom. T.L. "by way of," O.Z. "with."

14. *studied, lit. "seen."*

Vexation of spirit (see Glossary under SPIRIT).

15. This somewhat trite statement is inappropriate here and should perhaps be placed before or after v. 18. In any case it is probably an annotator's addition as M.J., and others think.

straightened. The Hebrew for this word is found only in Ecc. (7¹³ and 12⁸). It is a N.H. word and means to become straight, or set in order or to be in position. It is also found in Ecclus. 47⁸ and is common in the Mishna, Syr. and Aram. M.J. rejects the whole of this verse and also v. 18 as an interpolation.

missing, or a deficit or loss. Occurs nowhere else in the O.T. but it is frequent in Rabbinic.

16. Commenting on this verse T.K.C. asks, "Is truth mingled with fiction in this autobiography?"

thought to myself, lit. I spoke with my heart.

I have become great. An alternative suggestion is "I have come to man's estate (cf. Is. 1²) . . . since I have carefully studied wisdom and knowledge."

all who were before me. A strong argument used against the theory of Solomonic authorship, but it may be a conjectural emendation of the original text. LXX, Syr. and Vulg.

17. *determined to know, lit. I gave my heart to know.*

I had studied, lit. my heart saw much wisdom, cf. 1¹³ *madness* (*see* Glossary, and also following note).

folly. As the A.V. but if this is right the word in the R.T. should have been spelt in Hebrew with a different kind of s., as it is in many MSS. As it stands it means prudence. The passage is open to a good deal of discordance among commentators, some following most of the ancient versions, omitting all reference to madness and folly, others emending the Hebrew so that it reads "proverbs (or parables) and understanding," as the LXX does. C.D.G. has no hesitation (or "shadow of doubt") in concluding that the words (madness and folly) have crept into the text through the carelessness of a transcriber. V.Z. and H.P. agree, J.S.P. does not, and rejects the suggested emendation of H.Grä. (*see* Glossary).

This also. In the original we have a pleonasm—often found in Ecc.—untranslatable in English. Perhaps in the nature of an emphasis.

vexation. In Hebrew this is not actually the same word that is similarly translated in 1¹⁴ but it probably comes from the same root and is here taken to have the same sense, though it may mean longing or striving according to some commentators. The Targ. translation in both passages uses the expression "a breaking of the spirit." (*See* Glossary).

18. This verse may be a quotation, as E.R. thinks, or not, as C.H.W.'s opinion is.

Suffering (*see* Glossary under SORROW).

CHAPTER II

1. *Said I to myself, lit.* "said I in my heart." Another example of the Hebrew idiom referred to in previous notes. Many more will crop up later on.

Come now. A.V. "go to" = Get on with it. Koheleth was inclined to be slangy at times.

mirth. From a root meaning to rejoice or be merry—gladness or pleasure (*see* Glossary).

enjoy good, lit. see or look upon, i.e. enjoy or experience CHAP.
good. As in 3¹³ M.J. translates "have a good time." II

2. *mad, or madness* (*see Glossary*).
3. *exciting my appetite, lit.* "drawing out with wine my flesh, perhaps flesh like soul (*see Glossary*) means nothing more than oneself. The word translated "exciting" is common in Rabbinic Hebrew and means in N.H. to stimulate, encourage, attract, tempt, animate, excite, or entice.
- behaving reasonably.* M.J. thinks this is the addition of a pious commentator. In the language of the Mishna the word translated behave often meant to conduct oneself.
- folly* (*see Glossary*).
- brief life time, lit.* as E.V. margins explain "the number of days of this life on earth." The word translated "brief" comes from the same root from which the word book is derived (cf. 5¹⁸ 6¹² and 12¹²(q.v.)) and means "to count"; and as a noun "number" i.e. limited, as opposed to numberless or unlimited. C.D.G. translates: "the numbered days of their life," and A.L.W.: "the sum total of . . ." The phrase occurs again in 5¹⁸ and 6¹².
4. *made great works.* Alternative translations are: "undertook great works" (S.H.H.), "made my works great" (A.L.W.), "increased my possessions" (C.D.G.), "engaged in great enterprises" (H.O.), and "extended my operations" (F.F.). C.W. thinks it may mean fortresses. Or it might mean "enlarged factories."
5. *orchards.* A Persian word introduced into the Greek language by Xenophon, from which we get paradise. H.O. thinks it means something walled round. It occurs elsewhere in the O.T., only in Cant. 4¹³ and Neh. 2⁸. In Gen. 2⁸, LXX translates another Hebrew word meaning garden by paradise. It occurs thrice in the N.T. and has become anglicised with a specialised meaning.
6. *fruit trees.* LXX "timber-bearing trees." If this is right, then "park" would be a better translation than "orchards."

CHAP.

II

irrigate. The usual word for to drink, but not that used in v. 24 (q.v.).

7. *acquired.* Slaves might be bought (Ex. 21²), taken in restitution for a debt (Lev. 25³⁹); or come by in other ways, as e.g. if a slave gives birth to a child while serving her master—just as when a calf is born it becomes the property of the farmer who owns the cow. The word is translated “got” by A.V. and *acquired* here. It often has the narrower meaning of “to buy,” but not always, as the thing gotten may have been acquired by other means than purchase.
concubines, lit. maid-servants.

homeborn slaves. Different from a hired servant, cf. Gen. 14¹⁴. B.H. translates domestics.

herds and flocks. A.J.T. is better than the A.V. “great and small cattle,” the two words in Hebrew are both collective nouns, the one referring generally to kine and the other to sheep.

8. *collected.* E.J.D. “piled up,” F.F. “accumulated.” Another late Hebrew word which means to heap up or amass, translated “gather” or “gather together” nine times in the A.V. as here and 3⁵, but “heap up” in v. 26 and “wrap” in Is. 28²⁰.

provincial. Here again we have another Aramaic word, it signifies a district where judgment is executed. It is found only in post-exile authors.

treasures. Not property in general but something of special value.

human luxuries. The word translated delights by the A.V. and A.J.T. is translated luxury in Pr. 19¹⁰, in Ecclus 41¹. W.O. also translated it luxury. In the O.T. it occurs five times in all, twice in Mic. 1¹⁸ and 11⁹ and once in Pr. 19¹⁰ and in Cant. 7⁶. The word here translated mistresses has puzzled commentators for centuries, and such varied interpretations have been suggested as musical instruments (A.V.), coaches (Rashi), litters (S.B., H.Grä.), ladies (W.G., F.D.), concubines (J.S.P.), cupbearers (LXX, Syr.). Still others are goblets, demons, sedan chairs

and chariots. The Targ. adds other luxuries such as hot CHAP.
and cold baths, weights and measures made of gold, and "provisions for a whole year, even if it were leap year! Its etymology is uncertain, an astonishing number of roots from which the word may be derived have been put forward. In favour of women it may be, as Ibn Ezra thought, from the verb to take (woman) by violence as spoil, or to hide (in a harem), or to lie upon (a bed), or possibly by the merest tittle of a change "princess"; another theory is that the word is literally breast and on the same analogy as Judges 5³⁰ where the literal translation of "damsel" is "womb" it is fair to translate here paramour or some equivalent English word. Both here and in the example quoted it would be a case of the part representing the whole—synecdoche as it is called. The word *many* is not in the Hebrew, which reads "a mistress and mistresses," a Semitic habit of expressing an indefinite number like "two or three," or "several," or "heap and heaps." A.B.E. would like to read "choice treasures" to balance "royal treasures," but the second half of the verse seems to balance better if confined to human beings as the first half contains references only to inanimate objects.

9. *wisdom was my stand by, lit.* "stood to me." MS. considers this to be an insertion by some pious commentator.
 10. *share.* Cf. Eccl. 14¹⁴. It was recognized that a man had a perfect right to enjoy the harmless pleasures of life, for they are as much his "portion" as is his protection by the law. Cf. Dryden: "Take the good the gods provide thee" and Epictetus: "Good fortune like ripe fruit ought to be enjoyed when it is present."

F.C.B.: Sums this up very neatly in his O.K. translation.

"From nothing that I wanted I refrained,
 And all the while my wisdom still remained,
 And I got Pleasure in my Work and Toil—
 And that was just the Harvest that I gained"

Though it turned out to be But a Spider's Web which he
 had spun—Naught but a Bubble and a meal of Air.

CHAP. II. *I had done*, lit. "my hand had wrought." Another example of synecdoche or the part indicating the whole and therefore equivalent here to a personal pronoun. (*See note on 2^b.*)

no advantage under the sun. A colloquialism for "nothing seemed worth while" (M.J.). This verse comes better if it changes place with v. 12. After this verse E.J.D.'s dislocations (*see p. 19*) come into play and he follows with 5¹⁰⁻¹⁴ and so on.

14. *darkness* (*see Glossary*).

fool (*see Glossary*).

Whether the quotation at the beginning of this verse is inserted by another hand than Koheleth's, and whether it is appropriate to the subject or not, it certainly interrupts the flow of the author's argument.

hap, is not chance, but occurrence = fate or doom T.L. says.

15. *And.* This is translated "then" by A.V. Vulg. and Syr. ignore it altogether. The author's meaning probably is "that being so" or "in that case" as a few words later.

so why was I then, in those circumstances, or in that case, thought by some to be a Graecism. LXX adds: "because the fool speaks of his abundance" and the Targ.: "and there is nothing except the decree of the Lord ."

17. *seemed wrong to me*, lit. "was evil to me."

18. *my successor*, lit. "man who will be after me."

19. *mastery*. Another late Hebrew word = to domineer (*see note on 5¹⁰*).

20. *began to despair*, lit. "turned about to cause my heart to despair," yet another late Hebrew word.

21. *knowledgeably*, lit. "in knowledge."

properly. Again a late Aramaic or N.H. word which is peculiar to Ecc. and found only here and in 4⁴ and 5¹⁰, and as a noun in 10¹⁰ and 11⁶. It comes from a root meaning to be right or proper, and from this root is also derived the well known anglicised word Kosher, butcher's meat and other food properly killed and cooked in accordance with Jewish law.

- leave, lit. "give," but here in the sense of bequeath.*
- fortune.* Hebrew has simply "it."
- legacy, lit. portion or share as in v. 10.*
22. *vexation* (see Glossary).
23. *Painful . . . provoking.* These two words are opposite numbers in 1¹⁸ where the A.V. translates "grief" and "sorrow" as here, and this version "suffering" and "sorrow". Here the words are in reverse order and here again to preserve the slight alliteration of the original this Version uses the above words, though "torture" and "torment" might have done equally well.
24. This verse makes one think of several lines from O.K. e.g. "Better be joined with the fruitful grape than sadden after none, or bitter fruit," and "take the cash and let the credit go" or, as he says in an other quatrain, "Ready cash is better than a thousand credits." The same thought is to be found throughout every literature in the world, and in English has become familiarised by the hackneyed proverb "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."
25. *enjoy . . . if not I.* This verse contains technical difficulties. The word translated "hasten" by the A.V. and "enjoy" here (in Hebrew *chush*) has, according to B.D.B., two meanings, the commoner, it is true, signifies "to make haste," the other to enjoy or appreciate. The next word after *chush* is *chuq* which means outside or without, and by elongating one letter "apart from *Him*" (i.e. God), as LXX, Syr., H.E. and many authorities prefer, can be read instead of "except *I*." Other suggestions and emendations have been proposed, but are not very helpful. The expression "if not *I*" is unique in the O.T. and is claimed to be an Aramaism by those who say that Ecc. was not written until a much later date. Those who maintain that Solomon was the author say, quite truly, that *chuq* "without" is very common in B.H., ignore the fact that, coupled with *min* "from," the phrase is found nowhere else in the O.T., and only in late or N.H. If the translation in this version is the right one, it would seem

to follow naturally on the previous verses and to mean that the labourer is worthy of his hire, or, to put it another way: who deserves the “fruits of his hands” more than he who produced them? But it must be admitted that most authorities, e.g. H.E., F.H., following the LXX and Syr., supported by several MSS and Jerome, prefer to read “apart from him” or “without him” and think such a translation is more in harmony with the previous clause.

26. *for one whom.* This is not a strictly literal translation of the Hebrew, which reads “to give to (the) good in the sight of God.” Cf. Pr. 13²², “The wealth of sinners is laid up for the righteous.”

CHAPTER III

1. *Season.* An Aramaic word from a root meaning to appoint. It is found only in the later books of the O.T., but is common in the Mishna.

time, the usual Hebrew word. Many have tried to draw an inference here that the meaning which K. meant to convey was that there are favourable chances in every man’s life which, if “taken at the flood,” lead on to fortune; but these two words in this context probably do not mean so much a fixed time, but that in time or at some time certain things are bound to happen, not necessarily a time when a man ought to do so and so, but some indefinite time when he will do it. Everything occurs, if not in cycles, at some time or another—war and peace as well as all the natural functions such as crying and laughing. Jewish and Christian commentators have vied with each other, as G.C.B. points out, in finding fanciful allusions in the first eight verses to all sorts of things from predestination and justification by faith to the duty of stoning disobedient children; and even to partaking of the Sacrament at Holy Communion. “A time for everything” has become proverbial and many quotations from English literature could be cited, for Chaucer, Shakespeare, Fuller, Macaulay, Swinburne and Bernard Shaw have all used the

phrase. Certain commentators think that some of these occasions mentioned in the first eight verses were inserted by another hand than Koheleth's. Many more of course could easily be thought of, as they have been before and after Koheleth's time, for example story telling (Homer), and to quote a 17th century proverb: "a time to wink as well as to see." Other proverbs suggest squinting, fishing and so on!

CHAP.
III

purpose, lit. "pleasure," a late use of the word, cf. 5^{4, 7, 8}. Everywhere else in the O.T. the word has the meaning of delights/desires/favours/or pleasure, but in very late Hebrew and in the Mishna the word took on the meaning of what one wanted or had to do, hence some matter, thing, business or activity. B.D.B. quotes Is. 53¹⁰ (which is almost hopelessly corrupt and in disorder), 58^{3, 13} as further examples of this meaning, but there seems to be no reason why A.V. translation "pleasure" and Pr. 31¹³ "willingly" should not stand as competent translations.

2. *to be born*. An inaccurate (strictly speaking) translation of the Hebrew, but possible and preferable to the more correct "to bear." LXX, W.G., F.H., etc. translate "to give birth," A.R., H.E., Vulg. and others "to be born," E.W.H., O.Z. "to bear." Cf. "Every moment dies a man, Every moment one is born"—Tennyson.

to pluck. R.T. adds "what has been planted." This spoils the balance and is unnecessary. Some commentators regard the words "plant and pluck" metaphorically as referring to nations and kingdoms, cf. Jer. 18¹¹, but here probably the reference is only to seed time and harvest. The word occurs only six times elsewhere in O.T. and is variously translated by A.V. pluck *up*, root *up*, dig down and hough. Rashbam thinks that vv. 2-8 refer to peace and war.

3. *heal*. Ibn Ezra and C.D.G. "save."
breach. Translated here and elsewhere by A.V. "break."
build. To set up or repair. Ben Sira pertinently asked: "One building, and another pulling down, What profit have they gained but empty toil?" (Ecclus. 24²³).

CHAP.
III

5. *to scatter stones.* Several guesses have been made to find out what this really means, none of which is of much value, perhaps the best is that when planting vineyards the ground has to be cleared of stones and then the stones can be collected together and used for making a wall to protect the vines against marauders, but there does not seem to be any reason to go beyond the simple meaning of going through this process for any purpose whatever.
receive with open arms . . . to hold at arms' length. This translation is taking considerable liberties with the lexicon, but it seems more suitable to regard it metaphorically rather than, as Targ. does, to consider it an allusion to marital intercourse.
6. *lose.* This word generally means to destroy, but in later Hebrew it often meant "lose" (C.H.W.).
7. *tear.* Especially clothes as a sign of mourning, but L.H. does not agree and E.W.H. sees an allegorical meaning in this and all the other statements.
to be silent . . . to speak. Cf. Eccl. 20⁷ "A wise man will be silent till his time come, but a babbler and a fool will regard no time"—an excellent example of opportunism and the lack of it.
8. *peace.* The Hebrew of this word, translated "pay" in 5⁴ has the primary meaning of completeness, safety and so perhaps peacefulness. Its various shades of meaning include the repayment of a debt or a grudge. The word was commonly used among Jews in salutation "Peace be with you" at meeting and "Peace go with you" at parting. After this verse G.B. places 8⁹⁻¹⁴
9. *advantage* (*see* Glossary).
10. *seen.* C.D.G. translates "considered." Cf. 2¹² which like "examine" and "investigate" is one of the main shades of meaning which this common Hebrew word can adopt.
business . . . busy (*see* Glossary). Cf. 1¹³ not as Vulg., A.V. and others to afflict or humble or exercise (C.D.G.).
11. This verse is corrupt and of doubtful meaning; it may be a pious insertion. E.J.D. considers it shows traces of

Buddhistic doctrine. It contains also more than one example of N.H.

CHAP.
III

fitting. In classical Hebrew the word for this adjective was the equivalent of beautiful and more often than not was used as an epithet for fair women, but it was also applied to men, e.g. a *fine figure* (Gen. 39⁶) or a *handsome face* (Is. 17⁴²), and to *sleek cattle* (Gen. 41²); in Eze. 33³² to a *pleasant voice*, and in Ps. 48² to a *lovely situation*. In N.H. the word came to have a wider signification and to be more or less a synonym for good (In Eccl. 39^{16, 33} a parallel passage to this, Ben Sira uses the usual Hebrew word for "good"). Here and in 5¹⁷ *fitting*, *suitable*, *proper*, or *appropriate* is a better word to use. *Comely*, A.V. translation of 5¹⁸, is hardly the right word to apply to mastication. It may be a Graecism.

ignorance. The A.V., LXX, Syr., Targ., T.K.C., A.J.T. "world"; W.G., A.K., S.D.L., "worldliness"; R.V., marg., E.W.H., L.H., A.H.M., C.H.W., Ibn Ezra, S.C., O.Z. and many others "eternity"; G.A.B., J.C.D., S.H.H., H.R. "ignorance." Of the above interpretations the most natural is eternity, but it makes no sense in this context. Ignorance (which requires a different pointing from the M.T.) has much in its favour as was first pointed out by J.C.D. and H.Grä., and strongly backed up by G.A.B. In view of Koheleth's agnosticism (*Latin*, "ignorance") this may well be his meaning, viz. that man is made in such a way that his lack of complete knowledge makes him incapable of fathoming all the mysteries of life here and perhaps hereafter, or of understanding why e.g. the sun shines on the just and on the unjust, or in other words, as he says later on, why is man little, if any, better than the beasts? Lest any reader should take exception to the use here of that much misunderstood word "agnostic" M.D. may be quoted: "There is a reverent agnosticism," he says, "which honours God far more than a dogmatism which claims understanding of all His ways." A constantly recurring image in Persian literature is that of a Curtain

which veils the mysteries of God, cf. O.K. in several quatrains e.g. "Neither thou nor I know the secret of Eternity," "No one can pass behind the curtain that veils the secret," "No one is master of the secret of Destiny" (Heron-Allen's edition), "No one has solved the tangled secrets of Eternity," and "A Sense of time he gave to us yet Kept the Vision of the whole outside our Ken." Later on the secret of the Kingdom of Heaven was revealed—not to the wise and prudent but to babes. (Matt. 11²⁵) (*See also 8¹⁷.*)

so that no. Another Aramaism.

fathom. The Hebrew of this word is invariably translated by the A.V. throughout Ecc. find or find out, but elsewhere over twenty different English words are used by A.V. to translate it. Here "fathom" seems more suitable and in 9¹⁰ (q.v.) "able" seems indicated.

from first to last, or from start to finish, *lit.* beginning (or head) to end. The word translated last or end is a N.H. word (found again in 7² and 12¹³) which usurped the two commoner ones which occur in 4^{8, 16} and 12¹²; and in 7⁸ and 10¹³ the phrase used here is like our "from top to bottom" "tip to toe" or "head to foot"; in nautical parlance "from truck to keelson" and in public house slang "from froth to dregs."

12. *fare well,* *lit.* "to do (or make) good" LXX, Lat., Targ., E.H.P., C.H.W. Many think this is a Greek idiom (D.S.M. and Ors.), Ibn Ezra, A. Knob, F.H., etc. "to be of good cheer," O.Z. and T.Z. to do well = "prosper" or perhaps "get on" or may be "make good" or "have a good time."

13. *enjoy the good,* *lit.* "see good" a Hebraism for "to enjoy." In English we would say "enjoy the results of."

doeth. Here as in v. 12 "make good." This is only one of eighty or ninety different words by which the A.V. translates one Hebrew word. This verse is another example of K.'s advice to eat, drink and be merry (e.g. 2²⁴, 5¹⁸, 8¹⁶) advice equally pertinent to-day as witness the Prime Minister's

speech to his Constituents in May 1951, when he said "we **CHAP.**
should work hard, play hard and rejoice when we can." **III**

14. *for ever*, or eternity (A.V.D.), i.e. for a long unknown period of time.

diminished. A.V. uses "take" to translate over sixty different words, it gives the sense but it seems unnecessary to over-tax the word when another will do equally well. In Jer. 48²⁷ the Hebrew is translated "clipped" (of a beard) and elsewhere "withdrawn," cf. Ecclus. 18⁶.

fear. This word occurs nine times in Ecc. and is consistently translated fear (or "afraid" 12⁵). It does not mean "dread" or "fright" so much as "respect" or "reverence": "Fear of the Lord" is very common in Proverbs. In fact it might almost be called the key word of that book.

15. *seeketh . . . persecuted*. T.L. says these words acquired a judicial, forensic or technical sense. The first word is sometimes used of an avenger seeking to capture the culprit, and the second has the radical meaning of "to pursue" which is sometimes used in a good sense (e.g. Ps. 23⁶) but mostly in a bad sense (e.g. Ps. 119⁸⁴). It is also translated by A.V. follow, chase, put to flight and persecuted. Targ. interprets the last part of this verse to mean that in the day of judgment God will demand the persecuted from the hands of those who persecuted them. Various translations have been given by different commentators. The Basic English Bible has: "God makes search for the things which are past" and J.M. "God is ever bringing back what disappears." C.H.W. "seeks after that which has been driven away (i.e. the past)" so A.V. marg.

16. *under . . . sun . . . place*. Whether by accident or design each of these three consecutive words is a palindrome, *tcht, shmsh, mqm*.

in the place, so H.O., A.J.T.

there. Some authorities consider this means in a future world (G.G.B.), at a future bar (C.D.G.), in the other world (T.K.C.), but F.D. does not agree.

- CHAP. 17. Some think this verse is a gloss. Others (e.g. G.C.M.)
III do not.

I said to myself, lit. "I said in my heart." Coverdale translates "Then thought I in my mind."
Purpose (see 3¹).

18. T.T. and others consider that vv. 18–22 contain Epicurean doctrine.

with regard to, lit. or in legal and commercial correspondence jargon *in re*. An Aramaism. So also 7¹⁴ and 8¹.

exposed. It is very difficult to find the most suitable equivalent for the Hebrew of this word. It can be translated select or choose, (cf. 1 Chr. 7⁴⁰), purify or purge, test or prove (B.D.B., R.V. and F.H.), polish or clean, according to the root from which one thinks it is derived. Perhaps exposed is as good as any on the grounds that when a thing is polished up or cleaned it reveals what is underneath the surface. In N.H. the word is equivalent to seek out or distinguish and to sift or winnow and so purify (E.W.H.) cf. 1 S. 11³⁵, 12¹⁰. A.V. translates manifest, i.e. to show them in their true light, from a root meaning to remove obstacles.

for themselves, lit. themselves to themselves, a technical term "in their own estimation" (T.L.).

like beasts. The word "like" is not in the Hebrew but the Jews often used direct statements such as this in place of a simile, e.g. "I am a wall" Cant. 8¹⁰ and frequently in the N.T. e.g. "I am the vine, ye are the branches" John 15⁵, "This is my body; this is my blood" Mk. 14^{22–24} and we still do the same, e.g. "You are a beast." A good example of what C.G.M. calls the oddities of the ancient Rabbis is that they thought this verse meant that the nations of the world may see how the Israelites only follow after God, like sheep after their shepherd, as it says "Ye are the flock of my pasture." A recent Reader in Rabbinics at Cambridge (the late Herbert Loewe) explains this verse by saying that it means, to see and show forth to the Gentiles that they follow God as a beast follows the shepherd.

19. *happeneth.* Cf. 2¹⁵ from a root "to occur." By slightly altering the vocalisation C.H.W., F.D., A.L.W. and C.D.G. who considers the A.V. translation "a tame paraphrase", prefer to read as R.V. marg. does "the sons of man are a chance" etc., while others "fate," or "lot," or some "mischance" or "mishap."

CHAP.
III

they all have one spirit. Here Koheleth takes for granted that which he cannot prove, as he admits in v. 21, if indeed those are his own words and not an interpolation. Moreover he forgets that there is a *n'shamah* or breath of life which is peculiar to God and man and to no other created being. (*See Glossary*).

20. Cf. Ecclus. 17¹, 33¹⁰.

21. *whether.* So LXX, Syr., Vulg., Targ., H.E., F.D., A. Knob, C.D.G., T.K.C., H.Grä. and most modern critics but M.T., A.V., E.W.H., T.L., and others "that."

22. *prove to him*, lit. "bring him to see."

CHAPTER IV

1. Some commentators think this verse is corrupt. It is hardly a kingly statement, which perhaps shows that K. does not take much care to maintain the fiction that the author was Solomon.

again considered. The word "again" is not in the Hebrew which means lit. "I turned (or returned) and saw" a Hebrew idiom (V.E.R.), "I looked again" (T.L.) meaning perhaps I reconsidered or I continued my musings. H.E. translates "And again I saw." Cf. vv. 4 and 9¹¹.

sympathiser. This is not a strictly accurate translation of the Hebrew, the sense of which is difficult to understand in this connection. The root of the word is "to be sorry," "to console." Lack of sympathy rather than consolation here in each case indicates apathy. Can it be that the writer meant that tears called forth no sympathy and that even when the oppressed were violated there were no

ECCLESIASTES

CHAP.
IV

sympathisers, and as regards the oppressors no one took any interest whatever?

2. *applauded*. This is a rather free translation of an Aramaism which occurs only in this and three other late books of the O.T. One would like to translate it "envy," or held in esteem, or even congratulated, but the word means to praise or acclaim. This verse contains two other N.H. words "already" and "yet."

4. *And I saw it was, lit.* "I turned and saw."
successful (see 2²¹).

a man is envied of his neighbour. The Hebrew is ambiguous. It might mean that a man's object in working is to excel his neighbour or that if he is successful his neighbour becomes jealous of him. G.C.B. thinks the author is being satirical. Cf. F.C.B.:

"I noted with what pain Success is won—
And what's Success, when all is said and done?
 Getting the better of another man,
 Just one more Bubble blown under the Sun."

5. Critics disagree on the point whether this is an interpolation or not. Among the noes are M.J., W.O., among the ayes, A.H.M. and G.A.B. There is also a divergence of opinion over the question whether this and the following couplet are, or are not, poetry. They may be quotations of proverbs, and yet still be verse.

The fool. C.D.G. translates sluggard which he considers is legitimate since the Hebrew means fat and fleshy and therefore lazy and languid. T.P.D. translates "the befooled wrings his hands."

foldeth. This in Hebrew is the same word which A.V. in 3⁶ translates "embrace," cf. Pr. 6¹⁰ and 24³⁹.

wasteth away, so B.D.B., a Hebrew idiom which *lit.* translated, as C.D.G. does, reads "eateth his meat," or as A.V., "his own flesh," but there is no "own" in the Hebrew and therefore the meaning may be that he eats meat. "Eating one's own flesh," however, is a Hebrew

idiom for becoming emaciated, like "cleaning some one's CHAP.
teeth" (Amos 4⁸) which means starving by famine. A.V. IV

often uses the word flesh in the sense of meat, as we speak
of "horse flesh" in the same way. Cf. Pr. 19²⁴ where it is
the sluggard who is too lazy to use his hand to feed himself.
O.Z. thinks the phrase is the equivalent of exhausting
oneself. In Syr. (as S.H.H. points out) eating the pieces of
any one means to accuse them, so also Aram. in Dan.
3⁸ cf. too Ps. 2². Whatever the Hebrew idiom may really
mean, is "to eat one's own flesh" any more absurd than
our English idiom "to eat one's heart out"? Similar
phrases are to be found in the writings of Greek Authors.

6. This may be a quoted proverb, or the original words of Koheleth or more likely what the lazy fool said when he folded his hands, in which case the word "saying" should be inferred after "wasteth away."

palm . . . fist. Note the difference between what can be held in the palm or hollow of one hand and what can be grasped by the two hands made into a cup.

Restfulness. The Heb. for this word does not mean idleness in the sense of laziness, but rather temporary relaxation from active labour.

8. *There is one.* Many commentators take this to be the picture of a miserable bachelor. Others take the whole passage to be an argument against celibacy and others a warning against avarice. But is there any reason why it should be anything more than a picture of a solitary man without friends or relations who is exposed to the dangers of attack—an isolationist not necessarily by choice, but one who as F.D. puts it has no one to help him or by sharing his labours to enable him to make better use of his time. Jerome sees here and in v. 10 a veiled reference to Christ.

a second, i.e. a partner of some sort, or perhaps a wife or a friend,—not even son or brother.

Riches do not satisfy him, lit. his eye is not satisfied . . .
Another case of synecdoche.

stint myself, lit. "deprive my soul of good."
bad business. In 5¹⁴ the same expression is translated
 "misfortune." The root for the latter noun in Hebrew,
 which is found only in Ecc. is so translated "business" by
 A.V. in 5³ and 8⁶. Elsewhere, as here, "travail." With
 this verse cf. Ecclus. 14³ "Of what profit is money to a
 miser?"

Verses 9-12 are considered by some, e.g. C.S., G.A.B.,
 E.P. and A.B.E. to be an interpolation.

9. *two are better than one.* Cf. Chaucer: "and two of us shall
 stronger be than one," and Plato: "Even Hercules is not
 a match for two," and Homer: "two men together seize
 advantages that one would miss" (E.V. Rieu translation).
better result. A.V. "a good reward." The radical meaning
 of the word translated reward is "hire."
10. *fellow.* Something joined together, like the men of Israel
 in Ju. 20¹¹ who were "knit together as one man." It was
 very common for travellers on cold nights to pool their
 outer garments and lie close together in order to keep
 warm.
But Woe to him. A N.H. word found only here and in
 10¹⁶ used as an argument against the Solomonic author-
 ship. An almost identical word is used in Pr. 23²⁹. Cf.
 "A man without friends is like a left hand without the
 right" (Pirke Aboth).
11. *two . . . one, lit.* the two, or couple, and the one (who is
 alone). Not necessarily a conjugal partnership as Targ.
 meant in its paraphrase.
huddle. Seems more suitable here than "lie," or "rest" as
 in 2²³. For difficulty of keeping warm at nights. (See Ex.
 22²⁴ and Is. 28²⁰).
12. B.H. would place this verse after v.10.
overpower. An Aramaic word meaning "to prevail," cf.
 6¹⁰. H.E. translates "fall upon" and A.K. "attack."
a three-fold cord. It is a little difficult to see where the third
 cord comes in, but this after thought was probably
 inserted to round off the sentence and to introduce a

number "regarded as representing unity and completeness" CHAP.
(C.D.G.). In numerical proverbs it was very common to
add a further number to the one already mentioned, e.g.
Pr. 6¹⁴ "six things . . . yea seven" (*see also* Pr. 30^{18, 21, 29}).
F.D. thinks the mention of a third is a numerical mannerism and means "if two hold together, good, but if there be three, better still." Bishop Ambrose (A.D. 360) takes it as a veiled reference to the Trinity. The word "cord" occurs again in A.V. translation of 12⁶, but is not the same Hebrew word in the original. There it is the kind used to bind Samson (Ju. 16¹²). Here it is more of a thread easily broken unless bound together in strands, and is the sort used for securing tents. There is a Malay proverb which says: "A rope of three strands is not easily parted" and one is reminded also of the triple alliance, though one strand did give way in the 1914 war. The Talmud warns us "One loose cord loosens many."

IV

not quickly broken—but will break if strained too much.

13. This and the next three verses, as H.Grä. declares, drive expositors to despair. They break the continuity of the text, and no translator has succeeded in making tolerable sense of them. It is quite impossible to be sure which pronouns refer to which person. C.W. considers these three verses to be a public confession of Solomon's folly and sin.

homely. A.V. "poor." Very likely this word does not mean indigent so much as lowly born or plebeian, or as we say "no great shakes." Indeed lexicographers give three different meanings to the Hebrew root *sakan*, one of which is to be a steward (*see* Is. 22¹⁵ where A.V. uses the word "treasurer"). We are told in Pr. 17² that a wise servant shall have rule over a shameful son. M.J. points out that this Hebrew word is the equivalent of the French *mesquin* (almost a transliteration) which means petty or shabby, and that the Babylonian equivalent designates a plebeian; on the other hand it may be the equivalent of our "middle class," for as S.H.H. points out, the cognate word in

Akkadian represents the intermediate class between the nobles and the slaves. Perhaps this particular word (it occurs again in 9¹⁵) was chosen by the author to balance and be in assonance with "old," for the Hebrew reads *yeleldh misken melek zaken*. The word "poor" in the next verse does really mean impoverished. F.D. thinks the reference is to a definite historical event.

Youth. Hardly "child" as A.V. The Hebrew is from a root meaning "to beget" or be born, as in the next verse and in 3⁴. In 11⁹ A.V. does translate it "youth," though in the following verse it reverts to child. In other parts of the O.T. we know that the "child" in Gen. 37²⁰, i.e. Joseph, was 17, while the ones translated "young men" by A.V. in 1 K. 12⁸ were round about forty.

An old king. All sorts of historical personages of various periods have been confidently named as the originals of the homely youth and the old king—Abraham and Nimrod, Joseph and Pharaoh, David and Saul, Jeroboam and Rehoboam, Herod the Great and his son Alexander, Ptolemy IV and V., Amaziah and Joash, and others, but as C.D.G. says one might almost as well try to identify the miser mentioned in v. 8, or the couple referred to in v. 9, and D.S.M. says: "Conjectural interpretations of historical allusions, though attractive are not convincing." Other supposed historical references will be found in 9¹⁵, 10¹⁰ and 12¹².

who no longer knoweth. C.D.G. translates "does not as yet know."

how to be warned. These and the four previous words seem superfluous and spoil the balance, and one does not admonish a king in the same way that a father admonishes his son (12¹¹), so as the word is translated here by A.V. "admonish" and elsewhere e.g. Eze. 33³ by "warn," the last seems a more suitable word in this connection, if this superfluous line is retained.

14. *house of bondage.* In a figurative sense as in Nu. 30³ where the same root is twice used "to bind one's soul with a bond"

or in Dt. 5⁸ (though the root there is a different one but the same as in Ecc. 2⁷ where, in this version, it is translated "servant"). Opinions differ with regard to the derivation of the word, which need not be discussed here; suffice it to say that G.A.B. and M.J. translate "rebellious" or "rebellion"; F.H. "fugitives"; F.D., H.O., A.L.W., C.H.W.W., A.V. and T.T. "prison," but the last thinks the word may be used metaphorically for casting off restraint.

IV

cometh. So A.V., Syr. and Targ. but some prefer the past tense, and others the conditional.

station, lit. "kingdom," but here again the word may be taken figuratively as in Ex. 19⁸ where a kingdom of priests is spoken of, or as in English we say: "every man is a king in his own house," or as the proverb has it: "in the kingdom of blind men, the one-eyed is king." Some such word as the above, or "sphere" or "heritage" or even "circle" seems called for.

born poor. So R.V. and majority of authorities.

The rendering given in this version is the choice of other possible ones, but seems to be the most plausible. A.V., Vulg. and other authorities took the old king to be the subject of the last part of the sentence. The majority of commentators, however, concur in thinking it refers to the youth.

15. *second youth.* Does this mean the young man just mentioned, or another who supplants him? Some think that "second" may be a gloss. T.T. thinks that by the second youth may be meant the second generation. Bishop Ambrose says it means Christ, and so does a more modern commentator, H.D.H.
16. This verse is obscure and perhaps corrupt with a line missing.

Whom he led. So A.J.T. lit. "whom he was before." This Hebrew phrase often has the meaning of going before like a king leading his army in time of war (1 S. 8²⁰).
but they that come after shall not rejoice in him. As so often

happens in history, when a king who succeeds a bad ruler begins his reign by being popular, but himself is led astray and in turn is, like his predecessor, loathed. There is a seventeenth verse in the Hebrew but in A.V. it becomes the first of the next chapter of which vv. 1-7 are thought by A.H.M. and others to be interpolations.

CHAPTER V

1. *Watch thy foot.* As in v. 8. A common word meaning keep or guard. There is no need to split hairs over the disputed point whether we should read foot with R.T., or feet with Keri. The sense remains the same and the three words are probably an idiom equivalent in English to something like "Be on your guard" or "Beware" or "take heed," or "mind your step," as the Safety First Campaign advises. Feet here, like "flesh" in v. 5, and other parts of the body such as hands, soul, etc., may be a synecdoche. Cf. Pr. 1¹⁵, Ps. 39¹. M.J. says this is a reference to the three festivals during the year when Jews from all over Palestine made pilgrimages to the temple, and that by "fools" is meant priests.

the house of God. Does this mean Temple or Synagogue? G.A.B. inclines towards the former, and the mention of sacrifices would seem to favour this view.

be more ready to hear. The meaning here appears to be not only to hear but to heed and obey. The word translated ready is from a root meaning to approach—either in a hostile or a friendly way, cf 9¹⁶.

the sacrifice of fools. (See H.H.R.'s lecture on "The meaning of sacrifice in the Old Testament," in the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Vol. 33, 1950.) He also, in this connection quotes the Talmud: "Be not like fools who sin and bring an offering without repenting." G.K. "draw near to hear; better than the gift of fools is thy sacrifice." *for they do not realise they do wrong.* There can be little doubt that the text, as it stands in the R.T., is corrupt and

makes nonsense, literally translated it reads: "and the CHAP.
approaching to hear from the giving the fools' sacrifice V
for they do not know to do evil." It is really unemendable
and one can only guess what the author originally wrote
or meant. From the earliest commentators down to the
present day many plausible and not so plausible inter-
pretations have been suggested, of these "they know not
that they do evil" (W.G., H.E. and Ors.) is perhaps the
most likely. Other guesses are "they know nothing except
to do evil," "they know not how to do evil," "they do not
knowingly do evil," "they mean not to do evil," "know
not when they do evil," "consider not they do evil," "the
want of knowledge leads them to do evil." The word
translated "realise" in this version is literally to know.
E.J.D. thinks there is a passage wanting after this sentence.
It is hardly necessary to draw attention to the different
places in the O.T. such as Dt. 12¹⁰, Mic. 6⁸, 1 S. 15²²,
Hos. 6⁶, Pr. 21³ and in the Psalms where similar senti-
ments are expressed. This is not the place to give an
encyclopaedic article on sacrifices in general, the reader is
referred to *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* where he
will find the subject fully but concisely dealt with by
C.R.N.

2. *rash*. So A.V. to distinguish it from "hasty" where in 7^o
and 8² (q.v.) they so translate the same word.

quick. Of very similar meaning to above, but without
perhaps the sense of risk.

thing. This could be translated "word" as it is at the end
of this verse.

let thy words be few. An admonition against vain repetitions.
Cf. Talmud: "the words of a man should always be few
in the presence of God," and Ahikar: "Keep watch over
thy mouth, lest it be thy destruction" and Marcus
Aurelius: "Man should either not pray at all or pray
after a frank and simple fashion."

3. *dreams*. By a very slight emendation K.G. would read
"madness."

CHAP.
V

4. This and the following verse contain one of many admonitions throughout the O.T. regarding keeping one's word, cf. Pr. 20²⁵, Dt. 23²² and Ps. 15 and 24, Ecclus. 41¹⁰. Vows were voluntary and not obligatory, but once made were as binding as oaths (*see* Dt. 23²¹ and Nu. 6), they became, so to speak, debts of honour, like those incurred in modern days through betting or gambling.
suffer not, lit. give, allow or permit.
pleasure. (*See* note on 3¹ where the same root is translated "purpose" and in v. 8 "matter.")
6. *thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin.* H.O., E.W.H. and Ors. consider that flesh can be taken to mean the entire personality, i.e. thyself, but C.D.G. says that flesh here means the seat of carnal appetite and lusts, and the Rabbis explained what is meant is one's blood relations, or as we should say "kith and kin" or "one's own flesh and blood." The word so translated in Hebrew often has this meaning, e.g. Is. 58⁷ and elsewhere. The penalty for making a false oath descended not only on the perjurer but on his relations as well. If this is the right interpretation instead of "to sin," "to incur the punishment of sin" should be understood.
- angel.* C.D.G. in his commentary has a long essay on angels. He is convinced that here the reference is to a celestial being, not as some think to the priest or messenger who comes for the thing vowed, LXX and Syr. has "God," B.H. suggests "Priest," cf. Mal. 2⁷ and *see* Lev. 5⁴. F.D. says it is a priestly title and means the delegate of God. Rashi says he is the temple official who collected what had been vowed. Others think the recording angel. M.J. says it is a technical word used in the ritual laws of the Pentateuch "peculiar to the late Priestly Code," another proof that the composition of the book belongs to a later date than the close of the fifth century.
- wrath.* From a root meaning to foam, or be in a violent rage.
- ruin.* A.V. "destroy," a word which is their translation of a dozen or more different Hebrew roots. This is not one

of the more common, it may come from a root meaning CHAP.
to bind, or from one meaning to act ruinously or corruptly,
and in N.H. to wound or injure; it hardly means to
destroy completely.

7. This verse seems superfluous coming so soon after v. 3, and many think it is a gloss. E.J.D. translates happily if freely: "In the multitude of fancies and prattle there likewise lurketh much vanity." G.B. is of opinion that some words have fallen out between this and the previous verse, and suggests inserting: "Brood not over that which is too marvellous and too lofty for thee . . .," cf. Ecclus. 34¹⁻⁸. Ben Sira gives a graphic description of a nightmare in Ecclus. 40⁵⁻⁷, and Job complains of being scared with dreams and terrified through visions (Job 7¹⁴).
 8. E.J.D. considers this verse a bitterly ironical onslaught on bureaucracy and C.S. and P.H. regard it as a gloss.
province (see 2⁸). This word, says M.J., stamps Palestine as a province of the Persian Empire.
marvel not. G.G.B. says this means "be not overstrained." The word is translated elsewhere in A.V. by wonder, astonish, amaze. "Be not bewildered" might be an even better translation here.
matter (see 3¹ note).

He that is higher. What this means is conjectural. Many have been the suggestions made by commentators. One thinks the reference is perhaps to the Royal Secretary known as the King's Eye or Ear. Another the Satrap over the State Officers, the Inspector over the Satrap and the King over all, and others that God is meant, but "there be higher than they" hardly fits in with this, so perhaps king or God are not meant, but that there is yet another mundane graft, possibly the Royal Secretary, who takes his toll. E.W.H. probably conveys the sense as well as any by translating "for one who is higher watches over the high, and a highest over them." Another alternative rendering would be "for official watcheth over official and there are officials over them."

CHAP.

V

watcheth. F.D. "spy," it is the same word which is found in v. 1 (*see note*). After this verse G.B. places 10¹⁶–11⁶.

9. *advantage* (*see Glossary*).

land. A common word generally translated earth which sometimes means its inhabitants.

soil. Generally translated "field," but it is an elastic term and may mean either a small patch of ground or a large estate, in short any piece of land from half an acre to a whole country. The whole verse, short as it is, is obscure and difficult to understand. Of the many different attempts to arrive at a right solution, not one seems really successful, nor is it easy to see what connection there can be between this and the previous verse with which it is connected by a conjunction. The translation given in this version is that of F.D. (subsequently adopted by C.H.W.) who considers that "a patriarchal kingdom based on agriculture" is meant, and therefore it is an advantage to a country to have an agricultural king who is addicted, not to wars, etc., but to the peaceful advancement of the prosperity of his country and especially to husbandry and the cultivation of the land. Other commentators, however, take a different view and think the meaning is that even a king has to submit to being sustained by the products of the earth, or that the advantage is the king's not the land's, since even wild land when cultivated has no escape from taxation. K.G., by making a slight alteration, renders "the greatest advantage a land can have is a king for prince and peasant."

G.G.B. says vv. 10–17 are a satire.

devoted. Not a servant.

10. *opulence.* The radical meaning of the word is to murmur or hum—the sort of noise one hears in a crowd hence a large quantity, and in N.H. it came to mean abundance, the same word is used in this sense in Ps. 37¹⁶. Elsewhere it is used of the howl or growl of dogs (Ps. 59⁷), the roar of waves (Is. 60⁵), the rumbling of traffic (Jer. 47⁸) and so on.

increase, lit. "income" or "revenue." (Most people always want bigger dividends.) That which comes to one as a return from possessions or any other source. It can be applied to crops (Nu. 18³⁰) as well as cash, and to words (Pr. 18²⁰) as well as wealth, and to fish (Is. 23³) as well as other food. Cf. Horace: "Care follows money as it grows and greed for greater riches still," and Juvenal: "Thirst of wealth still grows with wealth increased."

11. This is a picture not so much of a miser as of a covetous man always wanting to add to his possessions and therefore to his additional staff which means additional expense, and all he gets out of it, besides anxiety, is looking at his collections. Moreover his anxiety deprives him of sleep since he is always worrying.

enjoy, lit. "eat."

benefit (see 20²¹ and 4⁴ note).

owners (see Glossary under BAAL).

12. *satiety.* This word in Hebrew generally means to be sated or surfeited with food; sometimes it signifies only satisfaction, but it can also indicate fullness of troubles or shame, and to describe an old man "full of days." Here the context obviously demands some such word as abundance, the same root is used in v. 10 as a verb. Here and in v. 10 A.V. has mixed up the two words satisfy and abundance, confusing and changing them with two different Hebrew words. E.J.D., who thinks "whether he eats little or much" is an addition, translates neatly "Sweet is the sleep of the toiler, but his wealth suffereth not the rich man to slumber." Horace in his Satires paints a picture of such a man who half dead with fright keeps awake all night fearing thieves or fire or other catastrophe; and cf. Ben Sira in Ecclus. 31¹: "Watching for riches consumeth the flesh and the anxiety thereof driveth away sleep."

leave him alone. From a root meaning to rest as in 7⁹.

13. *grievous.* A.V. "sore" here and in v. 16, but in 1¹³ and 4⁸ they translate another word "sore," both of which are "evil" rather than "sore." The "grievous" of this version

CHAP.

v

- could be equally well translated sickening, painful, sorry or crippling. In v. 17 the same root is translated sickness and in 6^a "disease."
14. *for his hurt.* M.J. thinks this is a gloss.
through misfortune. Or bad business.
15. In the 6th chapter of his 1st Epistle to Timothy the writer echoes K.'s statement that we leave this world as empty handed as we entered it, and later on begs Timothy to warn his diocese not to trust in uncertain riches.
17. *eateth in darkness.* M.J. emends to "saveth" in darkness—because he cannot afford oil for his lamp (H.O.) but both words are probably figurative and mean (T.T.) lives in obscurity or misery (*see* Glossary, EAT and DARK). Thomas Secker, the medical Archbishop of Canterbury in the eighteenth century, emends the word eat for mourn a very slight alteration of one letter in the Hebrew, but this seems hardly necessary.
exasperation. T.P.D. defines this word as "anger with a person on account of some wrong."
This and the two following verses T.T. thinks show epicurean trends.
18. *fitting (see 3¹¹).*
eat. Is no doubt used in its literal sense here. Cf. Omar Khayyam: "Better be merry with the fruitful grape, than sadden after none, or bitter fruit."
19. *riches . . . wealth.* These two words are coupled together again in 6^a. The Hebrew for the former is common in O.T. where it is always translated riches by A.V. It occurs in all eleven times in Ecc. The word translated "wealth" is an Aramaic loan word and occurs elsewhere only in Jos. 22⁸ (where A.V. translates it "riches") and in 2 Chr. 11¹.
empower. This word comes from the same root as that translated in this version "mastery" in 2¹⁰ and "master" in 7¹⁰, 8^{4, 8} and 10⁵. It is again translated "empower" in 6^a. The radical meaning of *shalat* is to domineer, be master, or have power, cf. the word Sultan. In A.V. it is translated throughout O.T. by the words rule, power,

dominion, governor and (in Eze. 16³⁰ of a whore) imperious. CHAP. V
share (see Glossary under PORTION).

20. This is a very difficult verse to understand if translated literally, and no commentator seems to have arrived at a satisfactory explanation. Perhaps the word "answer" has been confused with another similar Hebrew word meaning occupation or employment, i.e. business. S.H.H.'s translation in Basic English is as good as any, "He will not give much thought to the days of his life, because God lets him be taken up with the joy of his heart." C.D.G. translates, "God causes him to work for the enjoyment of his heart." We talk of our heart being in our business, and if our work is our sole delight we are so absorbed by it that we forget how brief is the portion of our life here. With this verse Bishop Westcott's paraphrase of John 4³⁴, "My true food lies in working," may well be compared. Note too the use of the word "food."

CHAPTER VI

1. *common.* So A.V., LXX, Vulg., M.L., but many commentators translate "heavy" (e.g. Rashbam H.E., F.H., and C.D.G.). The word in Hebrew comes from one of two roots both of which mean "to be much." It may therefore have the sense of weighing heavily or of being of frequent occurrence, i.e., common, general, or almost universal. Cf. 2²², 8⁶ a great evil, 6³, 7^{22, 29} many, 5¹¹, 6¹¹ increase, 1¹⁸ much, 10¹⁴ full of words. After this verse G.B. transfers vv. 8-12.
2. *riches . . . wealth (see 5¹⁹).*
honour. (All three words, riches, wealth and honour, are found together again in 2 Chr. 1¹¹). When used with riches, says M.S., has the force of luxury and perhaps here it is equivalent to affluence or opulence or abundance, and it is interesting to remember the growth of the root of this word in Hebrew. R.H.K., in his book, "*In Our Tongues*," shows how it began with the meaning of being heavy and,

because there was no coinage and go'd and silver had to be weighed, it came to have the sense of value or abundance, and then of pomp and magnificence and finally of honour and glory.

he wanted nothing, lit. "his soul wanteth . . ." more synecdoche.

Desireth. This word has many shades of meaning in English and in A.V. is the translation of fifteen different Hebrew roots. Here it has rather an intensive sense and is used of physical rather than spiritual enjoyments. Indeed in some parts of the O.T. it is translated covet (Dt. 5²¹) and lust (Dt. 14²⁰). In Pr. 23^{3, 4} it is used in reference to dainties. The picture here of a wealthy man who is able to command every dainty which takes his fancy, but is yet unable to enjoy or even swallow them, reminds one of the pathetic picture of a similarly situated person in Eccl. 41¹⁷ to whom death is more acceptable than such a bitter life and eternal rest than continued sickness.

partake, lit. "eat," i.e. enjoy (see Glossary).

stranger. Here the word probably indicates, as M.J. suggests, some one for whom one does not care. In its original sense it meant an alien or a foreigner. E.W.H. takes this to be a veiled reference to the Persian and his successor in world dominion. For similar cautions referring to impending Persian catastrophe he quotes 9¹⁸ and 11¹⁻³.

3. *hath no burial.* This difficult sentence (*lit. "and a burial does not exist for him"*) has been explained in six or seven ways by various commentators, but C.D.G.'s seems the best, viz.: to reduce the whole argument to an absurdity and suppose that the man, having become the father of a prodigious number of children, never dies.

a still-born baby. This is an Englishism for a word the radical meaning of which is to fall. It is used in Ju. 14⁹ of the carcase of a lion, in Ps. 58⁶ of the miscarriages of a woman and in Job 3¹⁶ of still-born infants. Cf. Omar

Khayyam: "I came like water, and like wind I go"; CHAP.
FitzGerald's 29th and 30th Quatrains are rather involved,
the 30th owes its inspiration to two ruba'iyat in which
occur the words: "There could have been nothing better
than that in this world, I had neither come, nor gone, nor
lived," preceded by, "Had I charge of the matter I would
not have come, and, likewise, could I control my going,
how should I have gone?" (Heron-Allen's Edition).

VI

These two verses are taken to be a concessive clause of
which the last line of v. 5 is the second member.

5. *The sun it hath not seen.* A phrase the equivalent of "it has never lived." Cf. 7¹¹, 11⁷. In Job 13¹⁶ referred to in the previous note the author speaks of seeing the light.
Even should. The Hebrew here occurs only elsewhere in Est. 7⁴. It is a compound of two words, but is common in the Mishna.
6. *a million.* Ibn Ezra took this figure of speech "a thousand years twice told" to mean 1000×1000 , i.e. an unlimited number, just as Dean Alford's hymn begins "ten thousand times ten thousand" is not meant to be taken as an exact mathematical figure.
7. *appetite, lit.* "soul," cf. Pr. 16²⁸. A.H.M. and E.P. think this verse is probably an interpolation. In any case it is most likely a quotation. (See Glossary under SOUL.)
8. *behave before his fellows* (W.D.M.), *lit.* "to walk before the living," i.e. as F.D. puts it "to understand the rule of life, or be experienced in the art of living"—in other words not the sort of bounder, who as some one wittily described him, "does things he doesn't know aren't done." Others think the wise man is one who leads a public life, i.e. a chief, and the fool one who lives in obscurity.
9. E.J.D. happily translates this verse: "Better look with eyes than wander with desire." It looks like a quotation or a couplet which has strayed from the next chapter. T.K.C. "roving of the desire" possibly a Graecism.
10. *named.* A Graecism. The Hebrew for this word can mean either to name or to call forth. The Rabbis interpreted

this verse in many ways, but it looks as though it referred to predestination. Cf. Job 14⁵, "his days are determined." *know*, i.e. fixed, though possibly it is only another way of K. saying there is nothing new under the sun, and that history repeats itself.

him. Does this mean God, so Targ., or, as Rashi and other Jewish commentators think, death? The Hebrew could mean "anyone, or thing."

11. *many* (see v. 1).
things. So C.D.G., W.T.D., but F.D. prefers "words." "Deeds" would do equally well.

the better. Here as in 2¹⁵ where the same word is translated "more," it means "what advantage (see Glossary) is it to man?" In v. 8 the same word is translated "advantage."

12. *shadow*. Cf. 7^{12, 15} and 8¹². This word is sometimes used in the sense of a passing shadow caused by a cloud in front of the sun, which may darken one's life for the time being, or may act as a protection or defence on a hot day from the sun's scorching rays; in either case it can only be temporary. The radical meaning is to shelter or shade. It is mostly used figuratively. (See 7¹².) A more permanent shelter may be the lee side of a rock, which is a protection from the wind (cf. Is. 32²), or a roof (cf. Gen. 19⁴). In the Psalms are several references to the shadow of God's wings. In 8¹² the same word is used in the sense of something very ephemeral.

E.P. thinks vv. 1-12 are all interpolations but G.A.B. would retain 1b, 2, 4 and 10.

CHAPTER VII

1. *A good name*. A.H.M. attributes the first half of this verse to a glossator. Name, of course here means reputation as in Pr. 3¹ and 22¹. Cf. Ahikar: "better a good name standeth for ever, but beauty wastes and wanes," and "Who falleth from me my good name," Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Ointment. In Hebrew *shemen*, which is a play on the word **CHAP.**
VII
 “name” *shem* and might be translated “*nard*” to preserve the word play. Other examples and puns and alliterations are found in vv. 6 and 9. It has been suggested that here the words “good ointment” may be a veiled reference to a grand funeral in view of the reference in the next line to the *day of death . . . than day of birth*. Cf. Eccl. 11²⁸, “Judge none blessed before his death,” but the origin of this now world wide proverb is assigned to Solomon. It has been quoted by Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles and Ovid.

2. *house of feasting*. T.T. says this means a banqueting house for a wedding feast.

will lay it to heart. Another of the many ways in which the heart is used to express, as in this instance, the sense of reflecting or seriously considering. Cf. 9¹ and Eccl. 50²⁸. This, as well as the succeeding verses, is hardly in agreement with 2²⁴ and other passages in the book.

3. *Sorrow* (*see Glossary*).

sadness, lit. “evil” or “badness,” but could be translated “adversity” or “affliction” and has indeed over a dozen different words by which A.V. translates it. Here it is almost synonymous with “sorrow.” “A gloomy-looking face” is perhaps how we should express it in modern English. The whole sense of this verse is unlike K. C.D.G. translates “Better is thoughtful sadness than wanton mirth.”

maketh the heart feel better. Why it should is not very obvious. According to Pr. 15¹³ “a merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.”

4. *the heart of the wise is in.* Cf. our expression “to have one’s heart in it.” Of this verse M.J. remarks: “There is not much sense even in a funeral oration although it is apt to be better than an after-dinner speech.” R.G. regards this verse as a gloss.
5. *than the song of fools.* Perhaps this means “than for a fool to sing your praises.” In this sense it makes a better parallelism to the previous line.

- CHAP. 6. *thorns under the pot.* Here again we have more word play; the whole verse is a mass of alliteration with the letters *s* and *k* and J.E.M. translates "For like crackling of nettles under kettles even so is the cackle of foaks." The Germans also found it easy to retain the assonance in their translations, three used the words *seufz . . . kesseln*, and H.E. *knistern . . . kochen*.

This also is vanity. Do these words belong to v. 6 or 7?

7. *for.* Because of the inappropriateness of this word here F.D. thinks that the first half of the verse may have been lost and suggests supplying it from Pr. 16³ which begins, "Better is . . .". E.W. and A.J.T. translate "surely," but the simplest way out of the difficulty is, with E.R., to ignore the word altogether. M.J. and A.H.M. both think the whole verse is an insertion by another writer.

a bribe breaketh the heart. Is a *lit.* translation. The Hebrew for the word "bribe" comes from a root meaning to give, but is never translated "bribe" by A.V., though in Pr. 15²² it might well be. The Hebrew for the word here translated "break" is once so translated in A.V. (Ps. 31¹⁵) but "perish" or "destroy" and sometimes "lose" as well as "fail" are the most usual translations. T.T. thinks it is used here in the sense of "corrupt," and "heart" in the sense of "understanding." Another and rather freer suggested translation of this verse is "unjust gain makes a fool of a wise man, and a gift perverts the mind."

8. *thing.* LXX and Vulg. and many commentators prefer *speech*, the Hebrew (*see* Glossary under WORD) can mean either. C.D.G. argues that the speech takes the form of a reproof. Business would be as equally justifiable a translation as speech, but we are left in doubt whether the end of the speech seems better than the beginning to the orator or the audience.

Patient in spirit, lit. "long in spirit" like long in the nostril (cf. Pr. 14²⁹ etc.), which means "slow to anger." Contrast with "short in the nostril" (Pr. 14¹⁷ etc.), which means short tempered.

9. *Be not rashly resentful . . . lit.* "Do not be so rash in thy CHAP.
spirit as to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools." VII
In order to put this into passable English one can only
translate it idiomatically and not worry over much about
the niceties of grammar. The word translated *rash* means
to be frightened and therefore to be precipitate (*see 5¹*
and *8²*). An alternative rendering might be "Do not be
provoked to hasty action." The second line might mean
that fools are easily provoked to rash action.

Resentfulness. Not the ordinary word for anger (*see SORROW*
in Glossary). Contrast this line with Pr. 14^{33a} where
Wisdom is said to rest in the heart of him that hath
understanding.

10. R.G. rearranges the order of the verses here, 12, 19, 10, 13.
for thou . . . unwise, lit. "for it is not from wisdom thou
desirest concerning this," which sounds a little lame.
Perhaps it was put in this negative form out of politeness,
though no doubt the author would have liked to say,
"it is so stupid of you to keep on harping on what you
call the 'good old days' and wishing them back." Cf.
Horace's old man "ever praising the bygone days of his
boyhood."
11. *Wisdom is good with an inheritance, lit.* "Good is wisdom
together with an inheritance and a profitable thing to
(or for) . . ." There are several ways in which different
versions and different commentators render this line.
The A.V. is as above and so are F.D., T.L., LXX, Vulg.
Others are: "Wisdom is as good as . . ." T.T., C.D.G.,
O.Z., A.V. marg., R.V. "better than . . ." Syr., L.H.
has: "weapons instead of an inheritance," and C.D.G. has
"riches." Other variations are "compared with" "when
it is," "like an inheritance."
12. *Wisdom is a protection as.* There is an obvious slip of the
pen in the R.T., a copyist having transcribed a *b* instead
of a *k* (two very similar letters in Hebrew) reading *in*
instead of *as*. The word protection is *lit.* shadow. (*See 6¹².*)
- 13-18. These verses may very well be interpolations.

- CHAP. 13. *meditate*, lit. "see" or "look."
VII *who can straighten* Cf. 1¹⁵.

14. *be good*. Be joyful. As C.H.W. says, the final clause is easy to translate "that man may find nothing after him" but not so easy to explain. Commentators have, as usual, offered different suggestions. C.D.G. translates "that man should not discover anything which will be after him," which is rather in keeping with 3¹¹ if the interpretation that God has purposely put ignorance into men's minds is right. Cf. Horace: "God in his providence shrouds in the darkness of night the issue of future time and smiles if a mortal flutter to pierce farther than he may" (Lonsdale and Lee's translation). Perhaps a better translation would be, "In good fortune be happy and in misfortune consider that both are God's work, so that (an Aramaism, see 3¹⁸) man may fathom nothing about his future."
15. T.T. sees in this and the three following verses references to post-Aristotelian philosophy, particularly to the Stoic, but F.D. thinks it is Aristotelian, i.e. holding the middle course between two extremes, cf. Shakespeare: "Some rule by sin and some by virtue fall." *There is*. A less literal and more idiomatic translation would be "sometimes" or "now and then." *surviveth*, lit. "to be long" almost always of time, cf. 8¹¹.
16. *Be not excessively righteous*. T.K.C. calls this "practical advice to steer one's ship between the rocks," and says the words are used ironically, G.G.B. also thought it was satirical, and perhaps it is a cynical addition by one of the interpolators. Righteous may be used in a technical sense and be an admonition to judges not to be too severe in their judgments; this it would appear is the way in which Targ. interpreted it. B.H. translates "Carry not justice to excess neither be rigorously exact." "Be not unco' guid" is most likely how a Scotsman would translate it, and others might think it was advice to "tread the narrow path which lies between right and wrong." Aristotle said:

"Virtue lies in a mean between opposite extremes," and CHAP.
it is well known that the golden mean was constantly VII
advocated by Greek as well as Latin authors. Buddha also
discouraged extremes of wickedness and righteousness
and recommended a middle way, which he called "the
Noble Eightfold Path." But possibly "religious" would
be a better word here than "righteous," for K. might
have been thinking of the Pharisees who paid tithe of
mint and anise and cumin, but overlooked such matters
as judgment, mercy and faith (*see* Matt. 23³³), so perhaps
the writer here meant religious or ritualistic, like the
Pharisees who strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel
(as E.W.H. thought), or it may be he had in mind those
excessively religious people who spend all their time
seeking out wickedness in others and have no time for
real religion themselves; another translation therefore
might read as an injunction not to be self-righteous.
over wise. The word translated "over" comes from the
same root as the word usually translated by A.V. "profit,"
and in this version "advantage," as in vv. 11 and 12.
(*See Glossary.*)

ostracise. The radical meaning of this word in Hebrew is
to be deserted (cf. Job 16⁷), or as A.V.D. translates it
"to be left alone," or as one might say be shunned; it
can also mean to be appalled as in 5^a where in this version
it is translated "marvel." Here both LXX and Vulg.
translate "be amazed." It is often translated "desolate" by
A.V. but only in two other places in A.V. is it translated
"destroy," in Is. 42¹⁴ (where the word comes from a quite
different root and means to pant, and in Hos. 2¹² of
vines, where "lay waste" would have been a better word
to use. The interrogative form of this line amounts to an
emphatic affirmation, that this is what will happen if
you are too goody-goody or too impossibly naughty.

17. *Why should'st thou die before thy time?* K. may have had in
mind the fact that excessive vice often leads to premature
death as in the case of the young man described in Pr. 7.

CHAP. 18. *this . . . that* (cf. v. 14 and 3¹⁸ etc.). If this is the right translation of the R.T. it seems fairly obvious that it can mean only that one is to avoid either excessive righteousness or excessive wickedness, and no commentator has satisfactorily explained away this unbiblical attitude, nor fathomed what K. really had in his mind. Possibly he was thinking that in the latter case it was one's duty to "sally forth and see one's adversary" rather than adopt "a fugitive and cloistered virtue unexercised and unbreathed," which "slinks out of the race," an attitude which Milton could not bring himself to praise.

He that feareth God. Most commentators consider this to be a gloss inserted by some pious critic.
will evade, lit. "come out of."

19. This verse too may be an interpolation as many commentators think.

fortifeth. From the same root as the word translated bold in 8¹.

many, lit. "ten." This was in fact the number of the rulers who constituted the city council. R.G.M. says they must be the King's officers or agents and that the maxim is clear. Wisdom in the King is better than the multiplication of officers. But more probably ten is here used for a round number like our dozen. Cf. Eccl. 37¹⁴ where Ben Sira uses seven as a round number. G.W. suggests a slight emendation and would read "the riches of . . ."

masters. Can it be that K. is here thinking of schoolmasters and means that a naturally clever boy learns more by experience and aptitude than a dozen teachers can instil into him? On the other hand the root of the word "masters" is a homophone and can also mean "shields."

In 9¹⁸ wisdom is said to be better than weapons of war.

20. In the R.T. the word "for" or "surely" begins the verse. After this verse G.B. places 4⁹⁻¹⁰. C.S. and P.H. consider it is a gloss. This verse comes very near to Rom. 3¹⁰.
21. *To all the tittle tattle, lit.* "to all the talk which they talk give not thine heart" a warning against being over curious.

Cf. Byron: "that abominable tittle tattle which is the cud CHAP.
eschewed by human cattle," and also Pr. 26²⁰ and VII
1 Tim. 5¹³.

For may be thou wilt. This might be rendered: "So that you may not."

servant. E.H.W. says this means the heathen and compares 10⁷.

revile. Curse (A.V.) is rather too strong a word, the Hebrew for it means rather to despise or treat with contempt. (See next verse and 10²⁰.) Also, to belittle. (Cf. Gen. 8⁸ of waters abating, and 16⁴ despise, and 1 S. 18²³ trivial). The usual word in Hebrew for to swear, take an oath or curse is not found in Ecc.

22. *conscience telleth, lit.* "heart knoweth."

23. *All this . . . it was far from me.* What does this refer to? And does it mean wisdom as W.T.B. thinks?

24. *exceeding deep, lit.* "deep deep" (in the sense of mystifying), a Hebrew form for an emphatic superlative. Cf. Pr. 20¹⁴, "bad bad" much as we would say "A preposterous price" when asked too much for something in a shop. Cf. also Pr. 20⁸ where deep waters are the equivalent of something difficult to fathom. B.H. translates this verse, "How distant it is and deep, deep! who can reach it?"

25. *I determined to know, lit.* "I and my heart turned about," a phrase without parallel in Hebrew. Evidently meant to be very emphatic like "I summoned up all my powers." to explore. Also a strong word, cf. 1¹³.

reason. The radical meaning of this N.H. word is "to reckon," and is found only in Ecc. (See also vv. 27 and 29 and 9¹⁰.) It might almost be translated "and what it all amounts to." C.D.G. calls it practical wisdom. In the Mishna it appears to have the sense of plan—A.L.W. points out that the word is common in N.H. and Aram. and might be paraphrased "rational."

wickedness, madness. "Wickedness" is defined by F.D. as conduct separating from God and from the law of that which is good, an intellectual and moral obtuseness.

"Madness," a physical malady under which men are out of themselves. Another translation which is adopted by H.E., F.H. and Ors., is "to know wisdom as folly and folly as madness." A.V. "the wickedness of folly," LXX "to know the folly and trouble and madness of the ungodly man." This verse, says D.S.M., contains stoic doctrines. *the woman*. E.W.H. says that the woman here and the one in v. 28 are not the same. T.T. thinks that K. may have had Samson and Delilah in mind.

26. *snares*. A N.H. word from a root meaning to hunt, cf. 9¹², 14 and Pr. 12¹². H.R. draws attention to the similarity of this passage and a quotation from Hesiod "a snare from which there is no escape."

nets. From a root meaning to enclose, also to split. In N.H. a hunter's (Mic. 7²) or fisherman's (Eze. 26⁵) net, hence to ensnare or bewitch.

Bonds. From a root meaning to tie, bind, or imprison (cf. 4¹⁴).

Good before God = pleases God.

K.'s bitter attack on women in this and in v. 28 may have been because like Ben Sira (cf. Ecclus. 42⁶) he had had painful experience of them.

27. *taking one thing with another*, lit. "one to one."
reason (see vv. 25 and 29).

28. *which yet my soul seeketh . . . one person out of a thousand*. Hebrew has Adam which may mean mankind generally regardless of sex and in this case include women, J.P.D. translates rather emphatically "one single specimen of humanity." It has been suggested that the censure was confined to the women of Solomon's own harem.

29. Thought by A.H.M. and Ors. to be an insertion by a pious commentator.

many counter plots. See vv. 25 and 27 and also 9¹⁰ where this word in the singular is found and variously translated by A.V., "reason," "account" and "desire." It is very difficult to find the most suitable English word for it here. A.V. has "inventions." H.E. suggests "useless

subtleties," O.Z. "tricks" or "artifices." F.H. "intrigues," CHAP.
 H.O. "perversions," and F.F. "villainies," Ors. "devices." VII
 In 2 Chr. 26¹⁵ the only other place where this word
 occurs in the plural, A.V. translates "engines." For want
 of a better word "counterplots" is used in this version.

CHAPTER VIII

1. *explanation.* The word so translated occurs nowhere else in O.T. Hebrew. It is an Aramaic word signifying solution or meaning, and is used by Ben Sira in Ecclus. 38¹⁴ in the sense of a physician's diagnosis.
lighteth up his face and the hardness of his face is changed. This is substantially the same as A.V., Aram. and Vulg., but various renderings have been suggested for the last line, e.g. LXX and Syr. translate "stubborn-faced shall be hated." D.S.M. "Shamelessness makes his face ugly." H.E. "The brightness of his countenance is doubled." S.D. "The splendour of his countenance is caused to shine." Some of these and many others need a certain amount of emendation, but the A.V. makes sense and there does not seem to be any need for alteration, especially as so many instances can be cited from the O.T. of circumstances altering the aspect of the face. In the well-known case of Belshazzar (Dan. 5) not only did the king's countenance change but his knees knocked against one another and his other joints felt all wobbly. The variety of alternative renderings is due to the possible difference in meaning of the Hebrew word translated here "boldness," and to the confusion in Hebrew of that translated "changed," with other similarly pronounced or almost identically spelt words which may mean "hate" or "double" and even "be beautiful" or "shine." The two sayings, probably quotations, are however considered by several authorities to be glosses.
2. *keep the king's command, lit.* "I keep the king's mouth." Either a word such as "say" must have dropped out of

the original, or part of the last letter in the Hebrew, for "I" may have been left out owing to the carelessness of a transcriber and the word should have stood for the interjection, "I beg of you," or as we might say "please." *because of.* The same Aramaism as in 3¹³ (with regard to), 7¹⁴ (so that).

the oath of God. The reference here is probably to the oath taken by the king at his coronation and by the people who swear fealty to him (*see 2 K. 11¹⁷*), calling upon God as witness.

3. *Be not hasty* (*see 5²*). G.W. thinks hasty here means "do not be afraid," cf. 10⁴. In other words do not hurriedly rush away but leave quietly and in a dignified manner instead of resigning your post in a huff and quitting at once.

pleaseth (*see note 3¹*).

4. *presence, lit. "face."*

stand not in an evil thing. So E.W.H. or "word." C.D.G. thinks the meaning here is a rebuke, E.J.D. considers *stand* has the meaning of persist and that the advice amounts to steering clear of political plots. The same sort of idea seems to have occurred to F.D., A.K. and L.H. *masterful.* The same root as in v. 8 and 2¹⁰, 5¹⁰ (q.v.) and 6². The meaning no doubt being that the king's word is law.

dare say, lit. "saith."

"*What doeth thou?*" E.W.H. and E.J.D. are probably quite right in thinking that this is meant ironically. The king was considered infallible (cf. Pr. 16¹⁰), and to question anything he said pontifically would be like kicking against the pricks and certainly asking for trouble.

knoweth. Or experiences, A.L.W.

5. *keepeth.* The Hebrew of this word can be also translated "observe," "guard."

commandment. E.W.H. thinks this refers to the Divine Command, O.Z., J.G.V. and Ors. to the kings referred to in the previous verse.

thing. Here again there is the choice between "thing" and "word," and one should in this case be consistent and translate here as in v. 3 by the same word. C.D.G. prefers "word" in each case. It is a matter of choice. In v. 4 however "word" is the obvious translation.

6. *there is a time of judgment.* "There is" is not in the Hebrew but must be understood, *lit.* "time and judgment," a figure of speech known grammatically as hendiadys where a single idea is expressed by two words joined together with a conjunction. Here it would seem that the wise man feels he must obey the king's orders even if they seem to him wrong, and comforts himself with the thought that the day is coming when the unrighteous king will receive his just punishment from One higher than he.

purpose (*see note 3¹*).

misfortune, lit. "evil."

control. This is the same word which A.V. in Ecc. generally translates "power," and this version "mastery," but here "control" seems a more suitable word.

8. *restrain.* From a root meaning "to shut up" or "withhold," cf. Gen. 8², where the same word is so translated by A.V. in connection with God's mastery over the elements.

wind . . . wind. This could be equally well translated "spirit" (*see Glossary*), which C.D.G. favours, while F.H. favours "wind;" cf. Pr. 27¹⁶, for an example of the impossibility of having the upper hand over the wind, and again Pr. 30⁴, "who hath gathered the wind in his fists?"

discharge. The word occurs elsewhere only in Ps. 78⁴ and means dismissal or furlough or "release" (T.L.). Just as a soldier cannot expect leave on the eve of battle any more than he is allowed to provide a substitute, so you cannot appoint a delegate or proxy to impersonate you on your death bed.

wickedness. H.Grä. followed by E.R. would read "riches." This is reversing the order of the letters in the Hebrew. Copyists were apt sometimes to write a word from right to left by mistake instead of from left to right as if we

CHAP.
VIII

wrote "deer" when one ought to have written "reed," or "warts" instead of "straw." Another kind of mistake a scribe might make, especially when being dictated to, would be to put "right" instead of "write" or *vice versa*.

9. *man . . . men, lit.* "the Adam . . . Adam."
to his hurt. Whose? Does this refer to the first mentioned Adam or the second? If the first it would be clearer to translate "his own hurt" as A.V., but versions and critics differ, those in favour of the first mentioned, include F.H., P.H., A.L.W., R.Y. and those in favour of the second, LXX, Syr., Targ., J.G.V., W. de W., C.H.W. and many Ors.

10. This verse, which is undoubtedly corrupt, bristles with difficulties; so far as it is possible to translate the R.T. literally, it runs thus: "and so I saw the wicked ones buried and they came and from a holy place they walk and they are forgotten in the city who made so" which is quite unintelligible. Many emendations have been suggested, but none gives complete satisfaction and nearly every commentator has a different solution to offer. To mention them all would be impossible in the space available here, and since the verse has no bearing on the context, the simplest way out of the difficulty would be to omit it altogether, but K.G. by putting this verse after the next renders: "And so I saw that the wicked were buried in a holy place, but those who have done right disappear and are forgotten in the city."

and so (or then). An Aramaism which occurs nowhere else in O.T. except in Esther. C.D.G. translates "thus" and Targ. "indeed."

buried, i.e. in honour—not cast to the dogs.

place of the holy. This is interpreted in very different ways by various critics. H.E. thinks it means a cemetery, F.D. Jerusalem, T.K.C. the temple. The root of the word means to dedicate and is used of temple prostitutes—male or female—so while in its good sense the word can be translated "consecrate" many will consider "desecrate"

to be a more suitable translation in its bad sense, though CHAP.
Heb. bears witness to the originally sacred character of VIII
this class of persons. Perhaps A.V.D. was right in thinking
that the reference here is to a brothel.

forgotten. So R.T. but LXX read "praised" changing one
very similar letter for another in the Hebrew.

when they had so done. E.W.H. "who had thus done."
Some authorities translate "those who acted right" in
contrast to the wicked, meaning that the latter were
buried in honour and lived again in their children, while
the righteous were completely forgotten, but this does
not seem a very convincing interpretation.

11. This and next five verses may be interpolations.

sentence. A Persian word found only here and in Est. 1²⁰
in B.H. It means "mandate" or "edict." In Aram. and
N.H. it means to adjudicate and is to be found half a
dozen times in the Aramaic portions of Dan. and Ezra.
quickly. Cf. 4¹² and 5².

The Hebrew of this verse is corrupt, the versions vary and
several emendations have been suggested.

12. *even though.* Most translations "because," E.W.H. "sup-
posing" as the word might be translated in Dt. 18²².
still I know, or "but I also know" (C.D.G.) or even "I know
for certain."

surviveth (*see* 7¹⁵). Here C.D.G. translates "is perpetuated"
thereby indicating that the sinner will transmit his sins
to his offspring.

who fear before him. Probably a gloss, or a sort of tauto-
logical emphasis, which we sometimes find in other parts
of Ecc. This verse is certainly very definite and leaves no
doubt about the author's opinion.

13. *wicked.* E.W.H. thinks this is an oblique reference to the
Persian Empire.

lengthen. The same word is translated "survive" in the
previous verse and elsewhere in this version.

shadow (*see* note 6¹² and 7¹²). Here the word is used of a
shadow, cast just before sunset which gets longer and

- longer and very quickly disappears altogether, not a shade, which gives protection from the scorching sun or the piercing wind. (See 6¹².)
14. upon earth and again in v. 16 (as well as 11²), but sandwiched in between these two verses K. twice drags in his favourite "under the sun."
- happenth.* E.J.D. translates "that happeneth which should befall wrongdoers and that betideth criminals which should fall to the lot of the upright." This undoubtedly expresses in English what the author had in his mind and as a free translation is excellent.
15. *applauded merry making.* To preserve the assonance of the original this might be translated "commended merriment." *Eat drink and be merry.* This "gather ye rosebuds while ye may" principle of Spenser and Herrick is found in Pindar, Aeschylus, Terence, Horace, Ovid, Martial and many modern writers down the ages. Perhaps the oldest dates back nearly 2500 years B.C. as E. A. Wallis Budge's translation of a papyrus of that date testifies: "Occupy thyself with pleasure daily and never cease to enjoy thyself." Cf. also Eccl. 14¹⁴ and Wisdom 2⁶ which the author of that book gives as an example of wrong reasoning and deceptive imagination. May be Jesus had this passage in mind when he gave the parable of the rich fool who used these exact words (Lk. 12¹⁹). In the same parable the fool's lament that he was embarrassed at not being able to find room where to bestow his riches is reminiscent of Ecc. 5¹⁰.
- accompany.* Elsewhere translated by A.V. join, abide, cleave.
- in the laborious days. . . .* This is a paraphrase of the Hebrew which is literally: "and it accompanies him in his labour the days of his life that God has given to him under the sun."
16. *cannot sleep,* lit. "see sleep with their eyes," i.e. to enjoy sleep (cf. Pr. 6¹¹).
17. F.C.B. in his version (*à la* FitzGerald) probably gets

nearer the author's meaning than any other translation CHAP.
(cf. 2¹¹ and note): VIII

For God has ordered his Creation so,
That what it means no one can see below,
However hard one strives to find it out;
The wisest may assert, he does not know,

which is a good example of what Harley's word Agnosticism
really means—not atheism but ignorance. (*See* note 3¹¹.)

CHAPTER IX

1. This is another very difficult passage and the text is probably corrupt.

all. K. has run riot in this verse with his "all's." The word occurs no less than three times in this verse and again in the first and third words of the next verse. It may be that the first three words of the R.T. in v. 2 belong really to v. 1, and that one of the "all's" is a transcriptional error for "vanity," as all that is required is to alter the vowels and by the merest title change a *k.* into a *b.*, reading with A.L.W., G.A.B. and Ors. following LXX and Syr. "all in front of them is a mere breath." G.C.M. gives a half-hearted support to this.

to explain. The radical meaning of this word is either to explain or to cleanse according to whether its root is *bur* or *barar*, or it might be a misprint for *tur* (*see* 1¹³, 2³ and 7²⁵ explore, which is little different in meaning from *bur*). LXX reads an entirely different word "to see." Among those who favour *bur* are F.H., C.D.G. and O.Z., B.D.B. to "explain," D.S.M. suggests "clear up."

actions (C.H.W.). The same root translated generally serve, labour, or work, etc.

love and hatred. A.L.W. thinks this means God's feelings towards man; others from Ibn Ezra onwards, they know not when the things which they like or dislike may come upon them, both are in the unknown future. F.D., F.H., H.E., M.L., P.K., T.T. and Ors. have different suggestions to make, but none is particularly satisfactory.

2. *all in front of them* (see above). Here vanity (see Glossary) could well be translated "obscure." In the words of Bishop Bickersteth's hymn "Our future all unknown." LXX and other versions by a very slight alteration in the Hebrew for the first "the all" (or "whole") in Hebrew read "vanity" and translate "Vanity is in all." Syr. has "All that is before him is Vanity."
Feareth, or "respecteth" as A.L.W. translates it. The Hebrew for it is the same which is so constantly used in connection with the fear of God, and means reverence rather than dread (see Glossary).
and to the bad. This is not in the R.T. but is in LXX.
3. *This evil of all.* The Vulg., followed by many modern scholars, consider this a superlative and translate, "This is the greatest evil of all."
and their end is with the dead, after Symmachus.
4. *joined.* In the R.T. two consonants have become changed and the word there means chosen or young man as in 1¹⁹ and 12¹, which makes no sense here, the margin therefore bids us read "joined" as in 4¹⁰.
hope. A word which is translated in A.V. by several different words including boldness, confidence, safety, trust. "While there's life there's hope" naturally comes readily to mind here.
a live dog. . . . Cf. Ahikar: "a living fox is better than a dead lion."
5. *H. Loewe calls this passage a Sadducean doctrine.*
reward. This is the same word which is translated "result" in 4⁹. It is generally used in connection with payment made for services rendered. There is considerable alliteration in the original between the words *sakar*, *nishkach* and *zikram*.

6. The author could be hardly more emphatic here than CHAP. when he so very definitely says that "never any more for ever . . ." ix
7. *food*, lit. "bread" as the word is more generally translated in A.V., but also, in a more general way, by similar words like provision, victual and even meat and fruit. So too, derivations of the Hebrew word to eat can stand for food, meal, meat and victuals, and another word for meat may be something you have to tear with your teeth. More than one early Father saw in this passage a prophetic reference to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. One of them was Philastrius, Bishop of Brescia (A.D. 380) and another was St. Jerome.
8. *at all times*. Disregarding the custom of wearing mourning garments on certain occasions.
9. *Enjoy life*, lit. "see life." Cf. our own expression, though not perhaps in quite the same sense.
a woman or "some woman." There is no article, so this means any woman not necessarily a wife, so Jerome, C.D.G. and G.A.B. The A.V. has after "under the sun" "all the days of thy vanity," but this is due to an accidental repetition in the R.T. from the preceding clause which the English translators faithfully copied. It is not in the LXX, Syr. or Targ. Among Akkadian myths, of about 2000 B.C., striking similarity with these verses is to be found in part of the tenth tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic which contains the advice of an ale wife to the hero, and may be freely rendered as follows—
- . . . "Full be thy belly,
 Day and night be thou merry,
 Daily make joyful festivity,
 Day and night be thou merry and bright,
 Let thy garments be spotlessly clean,
 Cleanse thou thy head, and wash thee in water,
 Attend to the little one holding thy hand,
 And clasp thee thy wife to thy bosom
- The above vv. 7-9 are decidedly of an Epicurean tinge.

CHAP. IO. "Whatsoever thy hand . . ." has become so proverbial that it must be left here exactly as it is in A.V. which follows LXX and Targ., and is followed by many authorities, ancient and modern. For the expression, "hand findeth to do," cf. Ju. 9³³ and 1 S. 10⁷. Only in the margin does R.V. give the alternative translation which is how the text was read before vowels and accents were added to the consonants, and this rendering is favoured by Vulg. and Ors. . . . "thy hand findeth (or is able) to do by thy strength, do." C.D.G.'s version is: ". . . findeth to do, whilst thou art able, do it." M. J., following A.B.E., translates not very happily or convincingly: "Whatever thou canst afford with thy substance, do."

plan. This is the same word in Hebrew which is translated in 7²⁵, 2⁷ *reason* and 7²⁹ *counterplot*. The A.V. uses nearly twenty different English words throughout O.T. by which to translate this root and its derivatives.

11. *strong.* Such is the radical meaning of this word in Hebrew, it is the equivalent of the Latin *vir*. As a noun it more or less corresponds to our Esquire, and originally referred exclusively to those who had acquitted themselves as men of valour in war, but subsequently included any one of means or position whether acquired by wealth or worth. Nine times it refers to women and is always translated mistress except twice (Is. 47^{5, 7}) when "lady" is the A.V. translation. Once (Pr. 33³⁰) it refers to an animal, and might indeed there be almost translated that "the lion is a gentleman among beasts," though whether its victims would agree is another matter.

food, lit. "bread."

chance. The word chance comes from a root meaning to reach or come into contact with, to encounter and is the same word translated "draw nigh" in 12¹. It is often used in an unpleasant sense such as touching an unclean thing, and as a noun is frequently the equivalent of the plague. In Gen. 12¹⁷ both verb and noun are used when

it is said the Lord plagued Pharaoh with great plagues. CHAP.
It occurs elsewhere in O.T. only in 1 K. 5⁴. IX

Happeneth occurs again as a noun and as a verb in 2¹⁴, 1⁵. Its radical meaning is to meet and so to befall or happen. Often to meet with an accident. Both these words therefore are very much alike in meaning and either might equally well be translated mischance.

12. *fishes*. Both Tristram in his *Natural History Bible* and Thomson in his *Land and the Book* describe the three kinds of fishing with nets—the casting or hand net, the drag, draw or seine net, and the bag or basket net. In addition to this fish were also caught by hook, harpoon and spear. *evil*. Probably a gloss. Vulg. and Targ. omit.

snares. Six different Hebrew words have the meaning of trap and can be translated gin, mesh, net, noose, pitsfall or snare. All of them, except one, are to be found in Job 18⁸⁻¹⁰. Here A.V. uses half of them, the first “net” comes from a root meaning to hunt and is to be found in 7²⁶ and 9¹⁴. The word is also found in the opposite sense of enclosing something as a refuge from outside attack, a defence or a fortress (cf. Ps. 18², 31³, 91², 144² and elsewhere). The other two words are both translated by A.V. “snare.” The first is of doubtful origin and is used either figuratively of any sort of snare or of a bird trap. The second has the radical meaning of “to lure,” and is also used figuratively as well as in the sense of a bait in a net for birds.

13. *Also this I have seen*. R.T. and A.V. have “wisdom” which may well be a gloss. C.D.G. translates “Even this wisdom I have seen” and E.W.H. “This also I, as Wisdom, saw.”

impressed, lit. “it seemed great to me.”

14. *surrounded*. A common word translated by A.V. by many different words from a root meaning to go round about—it occurs elsewhere in this book in 1⁶, 2²⁰, 7²⁵ and 12⁵.

siege works. According to the R.T. this word is the same

as that translated “net” in v. 12, but probably one letter *d*, the slightest possible alteration, has been substituted in copying for *r*, making a word which has the radical meaning of to confine or to besiege, though the word spelt with a *d* has very nearly the same meaning. *homely* (see note 4¹⁹).

Whether this story is founded on fact or is just a parable it is impossible to prove. It may have been suggested by the dramatic story of the pursuit of the rebel Sheba, who, due to a “wise” but nameless woman was decapitated and his head cast out to Joab, thus saving the little city from destruction (2 S. 20¹⁴⁻¹²). F.D. thinks it may refer to the deliverance of Athens by the advice of Themistocles and T.K.C. calls the hero of it “a Themistocles in common life.” E.W.H. says the poor man is Israel, and Targ. makes an elaborate allegory out of the story. Probably no particular historical incident is meant, but merely a general example of which many cases can be found in history where a liberator is regarded afterwards with scant gratitude even if his advice had been taken.

17. *quietly*. The first word has a restful comforting feeling, while *clamour* indicates the noisy undisciplined chatterings of fools (cf. Pr. 12¹⁸). The Hebrew for it is always translated by A.V. “cry” (except where the meaning is to call together or assemble). It can be spelt with a *z* or a *g* (cf. Gen. 18²⁰⁻²¹ where it is spelt both ways). The root means to call out, generally in an emphatic way, such as bellowing like a bull, and often indicates urgency, bitterness, horror, helplessness and other forms of distress.
-
18. *master fool*. F.D. says this is not a ruler over fools but among fools.
19. S.H.H. thinks that the last line of this verse may belong to the end of the first verse of the next chapter, thus making a pair of triplets, the one in this chapter dealing with wisdom and that in the next with folly. He also suggests two slight emendations and reads:

CHAPTER X

CHAP.
X

1. "A dead fly makes the perfumer's ointment stink,
 A little folly destroys the best of wisdom,
 One sinner destroys much good."

Dead flies. So Syr. and Vulg., but LXX, Targ., A.K., M.L., L.H., F.A. read "deadly." The literal translation is "flies of death." Cf. instruments of death, Ps. 7¹³ and snares of death, Pr. 14²⁷. The meaning however is much the same whichever translation is adopted, viz. "as one fool destroyeth much good, so one dead fly spoils a whole pot of ointment."

perfumer. The same word is used in the well-known passage in Eccl. 38⁸. It means a dealer in spices rather than apothecary in our sense of the word chemist.

cause to stink. Throughout the O.T. this word means to have a bad smell and is used of dead fish (Ex. 7¹⁷), dead frogs (Ex. 8¹⁴), rotten manna (Ex. 16²⁰), wounds (Ps. 38⁶) and so on. Occasionally it is used figuratively as in Gen. 34³⁰ and 1 S. 13⁴ where it might be translated "in bad odour." In Pr. 13⁵ the word is probably a misreading of and a synonym for "shameful."

ferment, lit. "causes to bubble" (see 12⁶), but LXX, Syr., Targ. and Vulg. omit the second word, probably rightly, as it may have been the error of a careless copyist who repeated part of the previous word.

more weighty than. . . . By textual change M.J. (following A.B.E.) emends to "a little foolishness annuls wisdom."

2. *heart.* Some take "heart" *lit.*, i.e. anatomically in which case the inference would be that wisdom is as rare as a heart on the right side of a man's body. Others that heart here is used in a metaphorical sense and means mind. It might also very likely mean that the sage is *au fait* and the fool *gauche*, the one adroit the other maladroit, or dexterous and sinister. Anyhow the wise man's heart is, as we say, in the right place. In Eccl. 21²⁶ the heart of fools is said to be in their mouth. Similar

- CHAP.
X
- expressions are to be found in English, Latin and Arabic.
3. *walking on the road.* Like the other silly fool who does not know the way to the city (v. 15).
sense is wanting, lit. "heart is lacking," i.e. stupid or brainless as in v. 15 where he is absent minded, the opposite of a sound or healthy heart, cf. Pr. 14³⁰. The Targ. comments: "He does things which are not right to do, and all say he is a fool," which would seem to indicate this particular fool is ignorant of the common decencies of society and like a vulgar parvenu "does things he does not know ar'n't done" and so proclaims himself one of nature's bounders, like the fool in 6⁸, and perhaps thought every one but himself to be a fool. A.V. and R.T. are both ambiguous, who is the fool? Does it mean that the fool declares by his silly behaviour that he himself is a fool (the pronoun is emphatic), or does it mean that he goes about calling every passerby he meets a fool? Cf.: "The fool thinks every one else is a fool"—Midrash. Opinions are divided, the probability is that the fool is so stupid he cannot help declaring by his attitude to every passerby that he is a fool.
4. *Spirit.* Here = anger.
leave not thy place. The A.V. translation has been adopted here which is also followed by A.J.T., but many alternative and quite different renderings have been suggested by various critics.
leave and
quelleth both come from the same Hebrew root and have the radical meaning of rest (*see* 7⁸), it is very difficult to translate this verse with any fidelity to the original text. The last line is reminiscent of Pr. 16¹⁴.
- soothing.* From a root meaning to heal or mend or repair; the word is used in the sense of soothing in Pr. 15⁴.
5. *error* (*see note on* 5⁸).
6. *folly.* So C.D.G., F.D., and C.H.W., but LXX, Syr., S.D.R. and G.A.B. the fool. H.Grä emends to "man of low degree" by reading *shephel* as in the next line for *sekel*.

- high places* = dignity.
- the rich.* M.J. reading different vowels, so that the word becomes "tens" interprets it to mean, as we would say, "the upper ten." The word occurs again in the singular in v. 20.
7. *horses.* A well-trained ass was generally preferred for practical purposes to a horse which required a whip to urge it on, while an ass needed the bridle to rein it in (Pr. 26³). Even a camel was preferred to a horse as a rule. Perhaps equestrians being less common, these "beggars on horse-back" thought they would be more conspicuous so mounted. It was prohibited by Mosaic law (Lev. 19¹⁹) to breed mules, so any seen were probably imported from Egypt.
8. *Pit.* The first line of this verse is almost identical with Pr. 26²⁷ but different words for dig and pit are used. The same words are found too in Eccl. 26²⁸ but the Hebrew is not extant. The word used here is purely Aramaic and means ditch.
- a fence.* Not a hedge, really a stone wall, the two-fold object of which is to keep out a bad object and to fence in or protect a good one.
- a serpent.* Was very often to be found in the crevices of a stone wall.
9. *quarrieth.* So A.J.T., the radical meaning is to pull up.
- hurt.* Generally mental pain or grief, only here of physical pain.
- splitteth, lit.* "divide" or "rip through."
- endangered.* A N.H. word occurring only here. C.D.G. following M.L., A.V.D. and Ors. translates "cut." Ors. think its radical meaning is to incur danger (LXX, A.V., H.E., L.H., W. de W., J.G.V. and others). T.P.D. thinks it means that the wood chopper must be careful. Perhaps running a risk, taking a chance, or tempting fortune, Targ. "burnt."
10. C.H.W. calls this the most difficult verse in the book and F.D. says it contains many peculiar and unexampled forms of word. R.Y.'s literal translation is as follows:

"If the iron hath been blunt and he the face hath not sharpened, then doth he increase strength, and wisdom is advantageous to make right." LXX and Vulg. translations are not in accordance with the R.T. as we have it and may be dismissed without comment; they can hardly even be called paraphrases, and as for Targ. the whole chapter is almost unrecognisable, except here and there, as having any connection with the Hebrew. Here the text does not pretend to be a translation; what the author was driving at seems clear, and is here expressed regardless of the words in the original.

blunt . . . unwhetted. A word should be said about the Hebrew of these two words translated "blunt" and "unwhetted." The first occurs elsewhere in O.T. only in Jer. 31²⁰ and Eze. 18², where A.V. translates "set on edge." Unwhetted is a derivative of the word which is so often translated by A.V. curse, but which means rather to revile or to be of little account (*see note on 7²¹*). Here it might almost be translated "deteriorated."

11. This again is not an accurate translation of R.T. The word translated "spell" comes from a root meaning to whisper and only occurs eight times in all in O.T., three times in Is., twice in Ps. and once each in Sam., Jer. and here. The last line is *lit.* "And no advantage is there to the lord of the tongue." A.V.D. considers this is a simile of a diplomat who fails to gain his point when negotiating with a subtle enemy. Most commentators agree with F.D., C.D.G., and C.H.W. in thinking "lord of the tongue" here means an enchanter.

12. *lips* = language.

devour, or engulf or swallow up.

13. *beginning . . . aftermath.* (*See note 3¹¹* where "first" and "last" are entirely different words in the original from those used here.) Aftermath comes from the same root as "after" in the next verse.

mischievous. This is one of the numerous legitimate translations of the common word for "wicked" or "evil."

14. D.S.M. calls this verse a polemical interpolation introduced by some disgusted reader. CHAP. X
15. *how to go to the city.* A proverbial phrase, according to D.S.M. for crass ignorance. H.E. thinks it means that he does not know "how to bribe the great lords of the city." Perhaps it is simply the opposite of a man who "knows his way about town."
16. *youth.* C.D.G. translates "childish." A.V.D. takes it in the sense of a servant, or some one ignoble. E.W.H. thinks it refers to Persia, and youth to the boyish character of the king. Ors. consider there may be a historical reference here to Ptolemy who ascended the throne at the age of five.
17. *Happy.* There are two words in Hebrew both of which the A.V. translates "blessed" and "happy." The word used here, if any distinction is necessary, is rather "happy," whereas for the root of the other and more common word, which has the radical meaning of "knee" or "kneeling," "blessed" is more suitable. It is often used in salutation like our "good-day to you," or "good-bye," which means "God be with you." It is never translated "happy" in A.V. and is not to be found in Ecc.
king . . . princes. Jerome took this as a cryptic reference to the Saviour and His disciples.
free man, lit. "son of nobles," from a root meaning to be white, an Aramaism, perhaps the equivalent of our "white man" or the Hindoo "pukka sahib," and not dissimilar from the Hebrew *gibbor* (*see below*).
moderation. This might almost be translated "like gentlemen" for the root of the word is the same as that translated "strong" in 9¹¹ (q.v.) and occurs again in 9¹⁸ and 10¹⁰. Many free translations have been offered by different commentators, e.g. "in strength and not in drunkenness" (F.D.), "in value and not in debauchery" (H.E.), and so on.
excess. Following "like gentlemen," this might be translated "like sots." The word comes from a root meaning "to

- CHAP. drink," and in this form does not occur elsewhere in O.T.
- X 18. This verse is better transposed to after v. 19.
slack. Cf. Pr. 21²⁵.
- drippeth.* Cf. Pr. 19¹³ and 27¹³.
19. *meal.* Not the same word translated "feast" above, but *lit.* "bread," (*see 9*?).
merriment, lit. "gladden life." LXX and Syr. both add *money payeth for the lot, lit.* "and the silver answereth the all," LXX "all things answer money," F.D. "Money maketh everything sensible," M.L. "Money must procure everything for them," Jerome "Unto money are all things obedient," E.W.H. "Money is answerable for everything." The word translated "answer" is very common in Hebrew and most likely has the same sense here as it has in English when we talk of being answerable or responsible for any one's bona fides.
20. *repose.* The A.V. translation "thought" is not a happy parallel to bed chamber in the next line, and D.W.T. suggests that as the root of the word in Hebrew sometimes has the meaning of to be quiet the word here may legitimately be rendered "repose." He also points out that by an emendation altering *d* to *g* one can read "bed" (so M.J. following A.B.E.). Sadi, the thirteenth century Persian poet, wrote in "Rose Leaves":
- "In private utter not a single word which thou in public wouldst regret were heard."
- Revile* (*see notes 7²¹ and 10¹⁰*).
Bird. Cf. 9¹² from a root meaning to twitter, sometimes translated sparrow, and generally in reference to smaller birds. In the next line to balance the bird of the air, the author uses the expression "a lord of the wings," an idiom similar to "lord (or master) of the wing" which can be found in Pr. 17. In Pr. 10²⁰ another word is also translated bird. This too is a generic name for anything which flies from an eagle to an insect. "A little bird told me" is a well known nursery saying, and is often found in English literature, e.g. Swift: "I heard a little bird say so," and

Scott in *Rob Roy*: "A bird of the air shall carry the chatter," CHAP.
—an almost exact repetition of this line. x

CHAPTER XI

1. *cast.* By far the commonest English word used in the translation of the Hebrew is "send"; it has however several shades of meaning, such as putting away a wife, i.e. divorcing her (Is. 5¹), a tree spreading out its roots or branches (Jer. 17⁸), shooting arrows (Ps. 144⁶), letting go (Ex. 5²), i.e. setting free or releasing, and many others. *bread.* This may mean corn, i.e. seed, cf. Eze. 28²⁵, Ps. 104¹⁴ (A.V.D.) or thin wafers (T.T.), or it may be figurative in the sense of being charitable (C.D.G.). The Rabbis evidently thought so too; more than one story will be found in C.G.M.'s Rabbinical Anthology to illustrate this passage by telling how one good deed deserved and was rewarded after many days by another, or perhaps in the sense of making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, or it may be literal, for the sowing of seed upon the waters does actually take place in Egypt during the inundation of the Nile. On the other hand the Greeks have a proverbial phrase "to sow in the sea" equivalent to the height of absurdity or a thankless task. An Aram. proverb ascribed to Ben Sira reads, "Strew thy bread upon the face of the water and on dry land, and thou shalt find it in the end of days," which C.H.W. thinks may be a genuine saying of B.S. *upon the waters.* The Hebrew has "upon the face (or surface) of," a synecdoche which need not be translated. *after many days,* or as we should say, "in process of time" (B.H.).
2. *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight.* An indefinite or even unlimited number, like our half a dozen, or sixes and sevens. But what does it mean? Is it the equivalent of our motto, "Don't keep all your eggs in one basket," or, to paraphrase Shakespeare, "don't trust your ventures in

one bottom, nor in one place, nor in one whole estate," and is so interpreted by most commentators, or does it simply mean that hospitality should be given with the idea that one good turn deserves another, which may come in very useful some day.

3. *clouds.* From a root to be thick or dense and to envelop. It was therefore a dark threatening cloud, very welcome in dry weather. The other two sorts of clouds mentioned in O.T. are a mist and a fine thin cloud which often meant simply sky. Another example of man's impotency; he can no more prevent the rain from pouring down than he can restrain the wind (8⁸) or permanently postpone the day of his death.

tree. The word so translated can be and is translated sometimes by stick, wood and other cognate words, and if there were no relevant context one might be tempted to think that K. had in mind the casting of sticks (lots) and to infer that one cannot dispute the result when once the die has been cast, in other words you cannot have it both ways when you toss up and say, "heads I win tails you lose." This verse used to be quoted by advocates of eternal punishment as a proof that no change could take place after death, as you died—in sin or otherwise—so you remained for all eternity. Dr. John Smith, of whom more in the next chapter, wrote many years ago: "It is of the greatest concern to take care how the tree fall. If a man at his departure out of this life fall towards happiness, or towards misery, in the same condition he falls, shall he remain for ever; and therefore it is a business of everlasting concern, to await our fall." But though man may not have control over the wind and cannot prevent a tree which is blown down from falling one way or the other it need not necessarily remain there and can be moved by human agency, so the analogy hardly holds. Prof. J. F. A. Hort, in 1849, wrote that one should "not play with Scripture by quoting passages which have not the slightest connection with the subject [the eternity of

future punishment] such as 'Where the tree falleth it CHAP.
shall lie'.^{xi}

4. This advice seems rather not so much to look before you leap, as to beware lest by hesitating you are lost. "Nothing venture, nothing have," as we should say. M.J. says of this verse that a wind observer or cloud gazer was a diviner who looked for omens in the sky, and that the maxim commentator who inserted it was making a sarcastic reference to an idler.
 5. *spirit*, or "wind."
- babe*, lit. "bones." They form so fundamental a part of man's being that they provide an obvious parallel to the term *nephesh* when that denotes the whole personality conceived as functioning physically. In Lam. 4⁷ bone is used with the force of body. In post-Biblical Hebrew it is used with the appropriate suffixes to refer to myself, thyself, etc. (A.R.J.).
6. *sow thy seed*. Perhaps this verse should come immediately after v. 4; it would then be a sort of follow up, emphasising the importance of taking a chance. If taken figuratively it would most likely mean do not waste your time, but always be doing something useful.
 - till the evening*. Possibly morning and evening are to be taken figuratively, i.e. from youth to old age.
 7. This verse and the next eleven are considered to be interpolations.
 9. *youth* is a better word for that translated "childhood" by A.V. (*see Glossary*).
- let thine heart cheer thee . . . walk in the ways of thy heart and in the sight of thine eyes.* Some of the older commentators thought these words were meant ironically, they sound very similar to those found in Nu. 15³⁹ where the Lord refers to the shortcomings of the children of Israel who acted in this way and went astray. There seems to be no reason why this advice should be singled out from others in this book containing the same advice as being particularly baneful.

- But.* Some commentators say this must be “and” not “but” and that the conjunction is continuative not adversative. Most authorities agree that this part of the verse is a pious intrusion by another author.
10. *Sorrow* (*see* Glossary). E.W.H. translates “discontent.” The period (Persian) was a time of general despondency to the Jews and dull melancholy. F.D. says the word includes both anger and sorrow, and may mean sadness, moroseness or fretfulness. Perhaps, too, it signifies indignation; “the word,” says G.C.M., “seems to cover all gloom and moroseness.”
- childhood and youth.* The word translated youth by A.V. is quite different from the two words so translated in v. 9. The first means generally a boy, the second which is from the same root as the young man apostrophised at the beginning, means an eligible young bachelor, from a root signifying choice, in this verse we have a word which occurs nowhere else in O.T. and may be derived from a root meaning black or dark hair (Lev. 13³¹) or skin (Cant. 1⁶). The other is dawn (cf. Ps. 110³) or early, which the A.V. took to be the meaning here; F.D. and Ors. think the reference is to the age before the hair has turned grey. In either case it seems obvious that the sense here is youth or early maturity, perhaps even middle age (*see* Glossary).

CHAPTER XII

- 2-6. Many have been the interpretations placed upon these verses, the principal of which are that they give an allegorical and picturesque description of (1) the oncoming of old age—clouded eyesight, the bent figure, the nearly toothless gums, increasing deafness, decreasing appetite which no tonic can stimulate, the slightest weight becomes an intolerable burden, the breathless struggle to climb up stairs, the organs of the body incapable of functioning properly, and sleeplessness until at last a blood vessel snaps and the blood ceases to flow from its source. (2) A

mansion crumbling to ruin amid the oncoming storm, CHAP.
or an old man's death in a storm. (3) The approach of XII
death pictured under the fall of night. (4) A literal picture
of gloom in a house where its master has just died. (5) A
general picture of old age with many mixed metaphors.
Thus it may be said there are two schools of thought, the
so-called anatomical, and the literal. Pages, indeed
books, have been written on this subject, but nothing
conclusive has been arrived at. Many of the suggested
interpretations are fantastic and need not be discussed
here. To give some idea of how far fetched and mythical
they are, a large number of them have been set out in
the following pages and only the less absurd need be
referred to again. At least ten books have been devoted
entirely to this chapter or to the first part of it; of these
we need notice only two, one by John Smith, M.D.,
F.R.C.P., who published in 1666 the first edition of *The
Pourtract of Old Age*. In it he proved to his own satisfaction
that Koheleth knew all about the circulation of blood,
almost 2500 years before Harvey's great discovery, and
was well conversant with the science of anatomy. Dr.
Smith claimed to have "carried the allegory clean through
as [up to that time] scarce anyone had done hitherto
without interrogation." He believed that in these five
verses Solomon couched in some one or other expression
all the visible parts of the inward and outward body.
To prove this he had, for example, to explain "daughters
of music" to mean first all those organs of the human body
which produce sound and second those organs of hearing
which receive sound; in all at the very least a dozen
different parts of the body. The book eventually ran into
three editions and those who read it will most likely be
inclined to credit the author with more imagination and
ingenuity than ever his hero, King Solomon, received
credit for, notwithstanding all the wisdom he possessed.
The second book takes exactly the opposite view. It was
published in 1874 by the Rev. C. Taylor, afterwards

Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, a man equally at home in oriental languages, the geometry of conics, theology and alpine climbing. His object was to establish in place of the "quaint traditional view" a literal rendering and to regard vv. 2-5 as a Dirge describing the state of a household on the occasion of death. Which of these two views is the right one, or whether there is a mixture of both must be left to the reader to decide for himself. On the whole most commentators seem to be of opinion that there are many hidden references to maladies (except loss of memory) incidental to old age. In addition to C.T. other authorities are of his opinion, whilst others consider parts are allegorical and parts literal. Those who are interested in this sort of "comparative anatomy" should read a book published in 1919 called *The Engines of the Human Body*, by Sir Arthur Keith, in which he compares muscles, bones, skull, foot and forearm, backbones, heart, arteries, lungs, and so on, with various parts of a machine.

Before going on to note briefly some of the words in these verses it may interest readers to hear the opinions of one or two authorities on the subject as treated by K. G.C.B. describes it as "analysing every successive image and reducing it to a hideous catalogue of the decay of each separate organ of the body." T.K.C. refers to it rather contemptuously as "the poem, if we may call it so." Another: "The excellency of this chapter alone so much outweighed the objections made against the rest of the book, because the words of it are destructive of one another, that on its account, the whole book retained the repute of Divine authority," and F.D. calls it "poetically beautiful."

Before taking the last chapter verse by verse it may be simpler to show in tabular form the various interpretations different commentators have given to the anatomical and other references in vv. 2-6. They are placed here in alphabetical order without comment.

<i>Almond tree</i>	nerves	
Christ	palate	
hip bone	singing birds	
hoary head	songs	
silver hair	speech	
white hair	teeth	
<i>Bowl (see Golden)</i>	thorax	
<i>Cistern</i>	tones of the voice	
air	tongue	
left ventricle of heart	uvula	
	vocal organs	
	words	
<i>Clouds</i>	<i>Desire (caperberry)</i>	
catarrhal rheums of old age	appetite departs	
death	Jews	
eyelids	sexual organs	
recurrent attacks of debility	tonic	
tears	<i>Doors shut</i>	
rain	constipation	
wine	ears (hard of hearing)	
<i>Cord (see Silver)</i>	feet fettered	
<i>Darkened</i>	hospitality ceases	
darkening powers of the mind	jaws	
gradual failing of the joy of living	lips	
	mouth	
	orifices and valves	
	senses	
	silence	
	voice	
<i>Daughters of music</i>	<i>Fears (terrors)</i>	
diaphragm	scarecrows	
larynx	<i>Fountain</i>	
lips	air	
lungs	bladder	
muscle		

	liver	<i>Grinding</i> (mill)
	reins	abdominal rumblings
	right ventricle of heart	chewing
	veins	digestive and other internal organs, normal functioning of heart and its pulsations, the impaired digestion
		mastication
<i>Golden Bowl</i>		mouth
	brain	munching
	head	pulsation
	gall	teeth
	heart	voice
	skull	
	soul	
<i>Grasshopper</i> (locust)		
	ankles	<i>High</i>
	arteries	the High One (i.e. God)
	bones	hills
	cartilages	knoll
	fibres	mountains
	Gentiles	stairs
	ligaments	storm clouds
	membranes	
	nerves	
	protruding hip bone	<i>Keepers of the house</i>
	rump	arms and hands
	sexual organs	back
	stomach	house staff
	tendons, etc.	knees
	veins	legs
	voice	loins
	weight, the slightest	ribs
<i>Grinders</i>		<i>Light</i>
	digestive organs	brow
	grinding women	cheeks
	kitchen maids	nose
	molars	
	teeth	<i>Lookers out</i>
		eyes

<i>Moon</i>	cheeks	
brain	pupils	
breath		
cheeks	<i>Streets</i>	
forehead	open passages through which the food passes	
nose		
soul		
<i>Mourners</i>	<i>Strong men</i>	
angels	arms	
	back	
	bones	
<i>Pitcher</i>	feet	
belly	hands	
gall of liver	legs	
heart	squires	
lungs	stooping frame	
veins	thigh	
	watchmen	
<i>Rain</i>		
old age	<i>Sun</i>	
tears	brow	
<i>Silver cord</i>	countenance	
backbone	forehead	
brain	heart	
marrow	sight	
nerves	spirit	
sinews		
skull	<i>Voice of the bird</i>	
soul	cock crowing	
spine	sleeplessness	
string of the tongue	the voice of God calling	
thread of life	the caged soul to	
tongue tied	Him	
urine	start at slightest noise	
	woken by birds	
<i>Stars</i>	<i>Wheel</i>	
apple of the eye	bladder	
bowels	breathing apparatus	

circulation of blood	<i>Windows</i> (lattice)
heart	eye lashes
kidneys	eye lids
liver	eyes
lungs	iris
rump	peering ladies
skull	spectacles

1. *creator.* By a slight textual alteration in the Hebrew H.Grä. would read "thy fountain" (cf. Pr. 5¹⁶) meaning "wife," which T.K.C. supports, while G.B. has "And remember thy fountain, the flower of thine age," i.e. be faithful to your wife. R.G.M. calls the first seven verses of this chapter a *tour de force* of symbolism, "the poetic beauty of the passage," he says, "is marvellous."

Pleasure. The same Hebrew word as in v. 10, where it is translated "acceptable," but see note 3¹.

2. According to C.D.G. this and the following verses are the figure of a gathering storm and not an allegory, and R.G.M. takes them all in the aggregate as meaning "the whole happiness of conscious existence."

3. *tremble.* This is an Aram. word and occurs elsewhere only in Est. 5⁹ and Hab. 2⁹.

become bent. From a root meaning to incline, hence in Job 8³ perversion, and in Ps. 146⁹ partiality. The same word is used in 1¹⁵.

grinders. From a root to grind. The cognate Arab word means "molars."

windows. Cf. Shakespeare: "My house's ears, I mean my casements" (*Merchant of Venice*, II, 5³⁴).

4. *doors.* Cf. Mic. 7⁵: "The doors of thy mouth." The word here is in the dual, which some interpret to mean double doors, others see in it a reference to ears or eyes. D.S.M. points out that the Indians call the body "the house of many doors" on account of its many apertures, e.g. mouth, ears, etc. Here probably deafness.

Sound of the grinding halteh. This can be taken literally

because the grinding maids have less work to do, or CHAP.
figuratively because without teeth the eater makes no XII
noise munching his food, or it might mean that as the
grinding ceased the voice of the grinding maid also
stopped, for in Eastern and tropical countries it is very
usual for those who work together to sing together, in
fact, as travellers well know, a man is generally employed
in a canoe expedition solely to lead the singing and
encourage the rowers to keep time.

sound of the bird is startling, i.e. the slightest noise troubles him, or it may mean he will wake at cock crow, but the sound of a bird need not necessarily refer to its song. It is true the Hebrew word so translated here generally means voice, but it can mean any sound as in the previous line, it may refer either to the sound made by grinding or the voice of the grinding maids, and in 7^o to crackling. It is also translated in A.V. by the bleating of sheep and the lowing of oxen and is frequently translated sound. Slight noises are naturally intensified when an uncanny silence prevails all round, and you can, as the saying is, hear a pin fall, or as Sir Walter Scott put it in *Marmion*, "an owlet flap his boding wing." Here too R.G.M. says the last three lines must be taken together to represent appetite, sleep and speech being feeble.

5. Here we leave the house and go outside.

scared. A rather stronger word than A.V. "afraid," and certainly not the same as fear in the sense of "fear of the Lord"; it has more the meaning of being dismayed, or frightened, e.g. by nightmares (cf. Job 7¹⁴). It occurs several times in O.T. and is generally translated by A.V. "dismayed," and in Dt. 1²¹ "discouraged."

footfalls. This word occurs nowhere else in the Bible and it may well be letters have been misplaced and the word is derived from a root meaning underneath, but those who think "terrors" suit the context satisfactorily are justified in their choice and there is no need for any emendment.

Almond tree. It must be borne in mind that the tree when

in full blossom has a snowy white aspect from a distance, and that its fruit was reckoned as one of the best in the land (Gen. 43¹¹). Cf. Moore: "the silvery almond flower that blossoms on a leafless bower."

flourisheth. So A.V., J.G.V., H.E., S.D.L., F.D., O.Z., LXX and Vulg., but A.K., W.G., T.T., F.H., L.H. "cause loathing" or "is despised" from another root. If the former translation is adopted the reference must be to the hoary head of the old man, if the latter it means that the old man has lost his taste for almonds.

grasshopper, or locust, it does not much matter which, for both are much alike and belong to the same family. In Arabic the root means "to veil" or "hide" and that is what hoards of locusts do to the sky. This may be a graphic one-word picture of a "dry, shrunk, shrivelled old man, his backbone sticking out, his knees projecting forwards, his arms backwards and his head downwards" (John Parkhurst). The "anatomical" school is hard put to find its equivalent with a part of the human body.

burden. There does not seem to be any reason why this should not mean what it says, viz. that the slightest weight on a patient becomes a burden when he is very weak.

desire. The A.V. translation is preserved though there seems no doubt that the proper word is caperberry as LXX, Syr. and Vulg.; its berries were used as an appetizer, and perhaps also as an aphrodisiac. That being so "desire failing" seems to be a very appropriate paraphrase. The word translated "desire" in 6² (q.v.) is quite different.

For the whole of this and the preceding verse cf. *As you Like It:*

"his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice, turning again towards childish treble, pipes and whistles in his sound. Last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and mere oblivion sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."

eternal home, lit. "home of eternity"—a recognised Egyptian

phrase for Sheol or the grave of the dead (*see Glossary*). CHAP.
As an example of Forbush's translation of K. in the XII
FitzGerald style the following quatrain as quoted by G.C.M. may be given:

"So man unto his House Eternal goes:

The portals once for entrance ope, then close.

Along the sodden street the mourners trudge—

But what is done behind those Doors, who knows!"

mourners. Some think this refers to men hovering near the house hoping to be hired.

6. *silver cord be loosened*. Of the two alternative readings in R.T. the marginal one is to be preferred. For *cord*, *see note on 4¹²*.

shattered. A.V. "broken," but quite a different word from that similarly translated in the next line, but the same as that in the next but one, the meaning of both words however is not dissimilar.

pitcher. Except in Kings this word is always translated "pitcher" by A.V. It is, says A.V.D., any kind of earthen vessel.

broken. The common word for "to break," or "crush," used of hearts, spirits, bottles, bones, bars, any kind of idols, ships and yokes.

fountain. Not the usual word for fountain, but derived from a root meaning "to bubble up"; as a substantive it occurs only here and twice in Is. As a verb it is confined to Ps. and Pr., but occurs in R.T. of Ecc. 10¹.

wheel. F.D., who interprets this anatomically as the breathing organ, adds that when it makes its last laborious revolution the death rattle is heard.

well. A more suitable word here than A.V. "cistern." Thus Euripides, "corpses return, the spirit to the ether and the body to the earth," and Lucretius: "all return again, earth takes what earth bestowed, and back to heaven remount the ethereal dews that fell therefrom."

7. *dust*. The same word which occurs in 3²⁰, C.D.G. translates "body" to balance "spirit" in the next line. He explains

- that dust is used metonymically for the lifeless body which is formed of dust (cf. Ps. 30¹⁰). This verse or at all events the second line of it is no doubt the addition of a pious commentator.
8. Opinions differ on whether this verse ends the original book as it began, or is part of the epilogue. Most commentators agree with H.E., F.D. and F.H. that it is the *finis* of the book. C.H.W. and C.D.G. are in favour of it being part of the epilogue which the latter considers is by K. and not an interpolation.
 9. From here to the end of the book it is now generally conceded that the verses are interpolations, H.O. thinks by four different hands, F.D., A.K. and C.H.C. dissenting. M.J. goes to the extent of saying there are as many as eleven different interpolators, vv. 9 and 10 are, according to T.L., the only bits of prose in the whole book except 1¹²/₁₃, 16.
 10. C.W. sees in this chapter a prophetical and inspired reference to Jeroboam and Rehoboam. According to him it is a prophecy foretelling what would happen to Israel after Solomon's death and was designed to provide comfort and instruction for those who would be severely tried. "Solomon," says he, "is a figure of his divine Antitype, Jesus Christ, the Divine Prince of Peace and Shepherd of Israel, gathering all Nations together in the fold of His Church."
- acceptable words, lit. "words of pleasure" (see 3¹ⁿ).*
11. *goads*. A rod for driving oxen (F.D.) from a root meaning to sharpen or point. Here perhaps, figuratively, a sort of large hoe to stimulate one's thoughts. The word occurs elsewhere in O.T. only in 1 S. 13²¹. It is an Aramaic loan word and not the same word so translated in Jud. 3³¹, the instrument by which Shamgar slew 600 Philistines, or the goad in the shaft of which the ploughman of Eccles. 38²⁶ gloried. These words come from a root meaning "to teach," i.e. "to goad on." The following explanation is a good example of the differences which existed among

the Rabbis—of which the schools of Hillel and Shammai CHAP.
are classical examples—"It means," said R. Berechiah,
"a girls' ball, which maidens toss in sport from one to
another, one hither, one thither. So one says the meaning
is this and another says its meaning is that . . . but
they were all given from one shepherd, that is from
Moses. . . ."

xii

nails. There is an obvious mistranscription in the Hebrew word so translated, but it is only in one letter and that pronounced exactly the same as the other, viz. *s*, so it seems evident that the scribe was writing from dictation. A careless phonographer in English might easily make a similar mistake. The root of the word means "to bristle up" and as a verb is to be found in Job 4¹⁵ in connection with hair, as a noun it is translated "nails" four times. Kurt Galling, in the Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research for Oct., 1950, considers that the Gold Sheath of Zendjirli may throw some light on the meaning of this word, for its inscription contains a word which it is hard to separate from it, and by a slight rearrangement and the alteration of one letter, he would translate this verse: "Words of wise men are like ox goads (which are thrust [*lit.* "given"] backwards by a shepherd) and like sceptres which are set up by the masters of assemblies." C.W. adds the comment that it is by these nails the tent of God's Church is kept together.

fastened, *lit.* "planted," and is nowhere else in A.V. translated by any other English word; it is a curious usage but not so odd when one thinks how firmly a tree can be fixed into the ground when once properly planted. In Eccl. 3⁹ the word there translated foundations by A.V. following the LXX, should be "plant," for when parts of the lost Hebrew of this book were discovered it was found that the original word was this one.

masters of assemblies, i.e. according to C.W. "all the writers of scriptures of both Testaments." The word comes from the same root as a verb which is translated by this Version

in 2²⁸ "to store," with the word "masters" or "owners" before it, many suggested translations have been proposed, e.g. "masters of collections" (or perhaps quotations). A.V.D. thinks it may mean "censors," cf. "Rulers (or Princes) of the Synagogue," and our "Master of the Rolls," and the proverbs beginning in Pr. 25¹ which were copied out by King Hezekiah's staff, other suggestions are editors of collections, or anthologists, or as Ben Sira might have said "grape gatherers," cf. Ecclus. 33¹⁶, he himself being an omnivorous assembler of other men's thoughts. G.C.M. suggests as an intelligible translation and as near as we are likely to get to the true meaning of the passage the following: "Like well-driven nails are the collections of sayings made by one master-collector."

12. *my son.* Here for the first time the reader is addressed as if he were the writer's scholar, as so often happened in Pr. *books*. Like the Latin word "libellus," which originally meant the inner bark of a tree used for writing tablets, then a small memorandum book, and later a petition, poster, or letter, and finally a libel or an indictment, the word in Hebrew could also mean any document such as a will or indictment, a bill of divorce (Dt. 24¹³) or a letter (2 S. 11¹⁴). T.L. suggests that it merely means here the chapters of Ecc. and that K. could go on adding more, but it is weary work and enough has been said; or, he thinks, it might refer to the main writings attributed to Solomon—3000 proverbs, 1005 songs, to say nothing of treatises on botany and zoology (*see* 1 K. 4³²), so let us put it all in a nutshell, "Fear God," etc. C.H.W. suggests that the meaning is "a real knowledge of a little is better than a superficial human learning." M.A., too, on more than one occasion issued warnings against superficial reading, e.g., "As for books," he cried, "away with them . . . cast away your thirst after them"; and "Wander at random no longer," but he did not object to an author being read carefully.

study. A late Hebrew word which occurs only here.

-
13. *Last.* This N.H. word has already occurred twice in CHAP. 3¹¹ (q.v.) and 7². It is found elsewhere in O.T. only in ^{xii} Joel and 2 Chr. 20¹⁸. *whole duty of man*, lit. "all the man." Other translations are "every man's duty" and "concerns man"—but neither "duty" nor "concerns" is in the original. Perhaps the meaning is that to fear God is all a man needs. C.H.W. following F.H. translates "for this ought every man to do," but here again there is no "to do" in the Hebrew.

GLOSSARY

ADVANTAGE. This word (*yitron*) generally translated “profit” by A.V., is a favourite with K. who uses it and its cognates eighteen times. Its radical meaning is “that which remains over” or “is left” and in Talmudic Hebrew has the sense of “additional” or “superfluous.” The particular form of this derivative which occurs in 1³, 2^{11, 13} (*bis*), 3⁹, 5^{9, 10}, 7¹², 10¹⁰ is found only in Ecc. Its two cognates, a matter of difference only in vowels, are to be found (1) in 2¹⁵, 6^{8, 11}, 7^{11, 16}, 12^{9, 12} and elsewhere only in Est. 6⁶, and (2) the other occurs in 3¹⁹ and elsewhere only in Pr. 14²³ and 21⁶.

BAAL. The radical meaning of the word Baal is to have dominion over, or to be the owner of, and as a verb it often means—in the case of a man—“to marry” (Dt. 24¹) and in the case of a woman, “to be married” (Dt. 22²²). In 5^{11, 13} and 7¹² the word is used in its primary sense of being the owner or possessor of something. In 10¹¹ the literal translation, “owner of the tongue,” simply means here “a snake charmer,” but ordinarily “a babbler,” and in v. 20 of the same chapter “the owner (or master) of wings” is only a poetical synonym for “bird” from the previous line. The seventh and last time the word appears in Ecc is in 12¹¹ (q.v.) where it is used in connection with another word of doubtful meaning. And so this kind of thing can be carried on indefinitely—if you are an expert toxophilite you become a master of arrows or an archer, if you are covered with hairs you own them and are therefore a hairy man, and one need not point out that a lord of wrath is an angry man, just as in 8⁸ he who is an owner of wickedness is a wicked man. Baal was also used as a second principal title for divinities and is found in all Semitic languages, as J. M. T. Barton points out in his Semitic Religions and quotes Lagrange as saying that the precise idea is neither real ownership nor personal ownership but real domination, and compares it with the rights of a feudal lord. Every city had its own Baal.

Analogous to this kind of idiom are such phrases as "son" or "sons of" . . . e.g. Job 5⁷ where "sons of flame" is taken by A.V. to mean "sparks"—not so very different from our expression "son of a gun" which is more or less the same as a "young spark." The only example in this book is to be found in 2⁷ where "sons of (the) house" is here translated "house-born slaves."

BUSINESS, LABOUR, WORK, TOIL. There are three words in Hebrew which often get confused with one another in the A.V. translation and it is not always easy to disentangle them and quite impossible to find one English word for each by which each can always be translated. By far the commonest root of these three words is *asah* which occurs many times in Ecc. It is generally translated *do* or *work*, but the six words by which it is translated in the A.V. of Ecc. are *make*, *wrought*, *execute*, *get*, *set* and *spend*. Another word is *amal* which constantly crops up, and is always translated labour except twice (4^{4, 6}) when A.V. uses the word travail. It is a favourite word of K.'s and occurs twenty-four times in Ecc. as a verb, noun or adjective, and may be defined as toil involving troublesome labour almost amounting to misery and suffering, cf. our "pains." It is a rather stronger word than *abhadh*, the radical meaning of which is to serve or work in any capacity, and indicates a certain amount of trouble and labour. In 4^{4, 6} the A.V. translation is travail. Toil and pain are only two out of several English words by which A.V. translates it. Yet a fourth cognate word *inyan* should be mentioned here. It comes from a root *anah* meaning to be occupied with and must not be confused with three other similarly spelt and common words, meaning (1) to answer, (2) to be afflicted and (3) to sin. It is not found anywhere in O.T. outside Ecc. where it occurs eight times, and is always translated by A.V. "travail," except in 5³ and 8¹⁶ where they substitute "business" which is a better English word for it and the one always used in this version. It is very common in Rabbinical Hebrew and has the sense of trouble or toil, business or task. Another common word for work, labour, etc., is *paal* which has more or less the

same meaning, and sometimes stands for what work produces, viz.: wages (Lev. 19¹⁹) or reward (Ps. 109²⁰). The word however does not occur in Ecc.

DARKNESS. The word darkness (*chosheq*) in Hebrew and English occurs six times in Ecc. In 2¹³ the word is used in its literal sense, but elsewhere figuratively as in the very next verse, also in 5¹⁷ where darkness is equivalent to distress as it also is in 11⁸. In 6⁴ (*bis*) the word might be taken either literally or figuratively, but probably indicates the private burial of a still-born baby. Eating and sleeping in darkness was a proverbial phrase in the East, meaning to live sordidly like a skinflint.

EATING. The word to eat ('*akal*) occurs fifteen times in Ecc., sometimes in a literal sense and sometimes figuratively in the sense of enjoying life (2²⁴, 3¹³), or the opposite like "eating in darkness" (5¹⁷), which is used in a doubly figurative sense and gives the idea of the thoroughly miserable existence of one who has no friends and, either through poverty or some physical cause, is unable to enjoy the ordinary necessities of life, still less its luxuries.

For the curious expression "eating one's own flesh," see note on 4⁵.

EVERLASTING. The word Eternity occurs but once in A.V. and that in Is. 57¹⁵, eternal only twice in O.T. Ever and everlasting are the commoner translations and the principal Hebrew words which concern us here are '*olam*' and '*ad*'. The former has over twenty-five different English words to represent it in A.V., the principal of which are: always, ancient, ever, lasting, long, old, perpetual and world. According to B.D.B. the word in Hebrew is a homonym and the root of one means to conceal, and of another to be mature; the third which concerns us here is of dubious origin, but appears to mean something of very long duration either ancient or future and may well be a derivative of the first root, i.e. something hidden from us. (See note on 3¹¹ under IGNORANCE). All that can be said with any approach to certainty is that the word indicates as a rule some indefinite

period of time which may last for one generation or for untold generations. The word occurs seven times in Ecc.—translated “ever” or “never” in 1⁴, 3¹⁴, 9⁶, “no more” 2¹⁸, “ignorance” 3¹¹, and “eternity” or “eternal” 1¹⁰ and 12⁵. ‘*Ad*’ has the radical meaning of to advance and as a noun comes to mean perpetuity whether of past, present or future existence. It is frequently used in conjunction with *olam*, especially in the Psalms and might then be translated “forever and beyond,” thus giving emphasis to the ceaselessness of eternity. The word in this sense is not to be found in Ecc.

EYE. A.R.J. points out in his study of “The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel,” the eye (‘*ayin*) in O.T. is related to a wide range of physical activity—pride or humility, desire or hope, disappointment or pity. A right or wrong use can be made of them (2¹⁴), they can be gratified (2¹⁰ and 5¹¹), or not (1⁸, 4⁸), and they are sometimes used in a figurative sense (2⁸). In 2¹ there is a Hebrew expression which literally translated is “look on good” which is almost the exact equivalent of our English “have a good time”; more freely it might be translated “revel in fun.” As the eye is the organ of sight, reference should be made to the verb “See” which is used in so many different senses in Ecc.

FEAR (*yirah*). This word occurs seven times in Ecc. It has not the same meaning that is generally associated to-day with fear in the sense of dread. Reverence or respect, especially in 9², would be a better word for it. Sir Thomas Browne in his *Religio Medici* says: “I fear God, yet am not afraid of Him.” In 12⁵ (q.v.) the word which A.V. translates “fears” is quite a different word, and in this Version is translated “footfalls,” but see note thereon.

FIND. This is A.V. translation in Ecc. of one Hebrew word (*maga*), which occurs seventeen times in Ecc. and has a variety of shades of meaning, such as fathom in 3¹¹, discover 7¹⁴, explore 7²⁴, experience 7²⁰, search 7²⁸, know 8¹⁷ (3), find a job 9¹⁰, acquire 11¹, find the right word 12¹⁰.

FOLLY. The root *skl* outside Ecc., where it occurs twelve times (but see note on 10⁶), is found in only a comparatively

few other places, four times in Sam., twice in Chr. and Jer., and once in Gen. and Is. The other spelling, *ksl*, is found nineteen times in Ecc., about fifty times in Pr. and once or twice in Job., Ps., Is., Jer. and Am. The radical meaning of the last word is to be thick, as we might say "thick headed" or "crass." T.B.D. says the difference between *skl* and *ksl* is that the former means to act the fool and the latter has the idea of being befooled, and has the meaning of subtlety as well as folly, cf. 1 S. 13¹³ and 2 Chr. 16⁹ and Is. 44²⁵. The two words are obviously akin to one another, both in sound and sense, and there seems to be no reason why they should not have been translated by the same English word. In 1¹⁷ (q.v.) there is almost certainly a misprint due to the scribe having taken the word from dictation, for the letter *s* sounds exactly the same whether it is the fifteenth or twenty-first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, as in English *c* and *s* do in, e.g. "cessation." Here it is the twenty-first and therefore ought by right to mean "prudence" or "insight," a word used several times in Pr. and elsewhere. Throughout the O.T. are other Hebrew words meaning "foolish," "stupid," or "simple," but they are not to be found in Ecc.

FOOD (*see* 9⁷).

GRIEF (*see* SORROW).

HEART. The Jews and other Orientals regarded the heart (*leb*) very much as we regard the brain, for which there is no word in B.H., though in N.H. another word from a root meaning marrow, came into use often in connection with the head. Prof. A. R. Johnson in his interesting *Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel* gives many examples of the different ways in which the heart is employed figuratively to express this or that state of mind. It can be the barometer, so to speak, of wisdom, mirth, sorrow, pride, humility, desire, envy, thought and sense. Sometimes it is almost synonymous with our idea of soul, and sometimes it is the equivalent of conscience, e.g. 7²². Often it signifies (like many other parts of the body) the whole ego. In Ecc. the word occurs all but forty times, and in idioms such as 1¹³ it is often not necessary

even to translate the word, which indeed is not done by A.V. in 7²¹. To the Jew the heart, not the brain, was the seat of the intellect, so it is often a synonym for the mind, and, as in English, it is sometimes used to indicate the centre or core of things much as we speak of the heart of Africa, or the gist of the matter. Numerous examples are to be found in Ecc. of how one can *give* one's heart (1¹³, 1⁷, 7², 2¹, 8⁹, 1⁶, 9¹), which may be translated to make up one's mind, to determine, lay to heart, pay attention, apply one's heart and so on; *say* or *speak* in it (1¹⁶, 2¹, 1⁵ (*bis*)); twice (2²⁰, 7²³ (*bis*)) K. uses the word *turned about* in connection with the heart which indicates a certain amount of indecision, and might almost be translated, "I looked round in every direction," whereas in 7²² and 8⁸ with the word *know* there is certainty. In 7⁷ a heart is said to be "broken" (but see note thereon), but in 9⁷ and 11⁸ "to be in good heart" is bespoken.

KNOWLEDGE (*see* WISDOM).

LABOUR (*see* BUSINESS).

LAUGHTER (*see* MIRTH).

MADNESS (*holelah*). This word occurs six times in Ecc. and nowhere else in O.T. In Hebrew its root is a homonym and in its use here means to be boastful and hence deranged. In 1¹⁷ (q.v.) the LXX followed by Syr., reading another word, translates "proverbs," but in 2¹² and 7²⁵ "frenzied" or "deranged," and so also in 2³, 9³ and 10¹³.

MAN. Three words are translated *man* in Ecc. by A.V. The commonest is Adam which occurs fifty times, Ish occurs eight times and Enosh twice (9⁴ and 12³). Adam has the more general meaning of mankind, i.e. the rank and file, while the second is more the individual. The third word has the radical meaning of being sociable and again refers mostly, but not invariably, to the human race *en masse*. In 4¹³ the adjective translated "old" is often as a noun translated "elder." Its basic meaning is bearded, but nevertheless was the epithet given to Sarah in Gen. 18¹¹. Another root (*gibbor*), a derivative of which is also translated "man" in other books of the O.T., occurs in Ecc. four times, but only as a verb, 10¹⁰,

9¹¹, (q.v.) and in 9¹⁶, 10¹⁷ where it is translated "strength," an attribute with which the word is so often associated when the well-known phrase "mighty man of valour" is found. Two words translated "man" elsewhere in the O.T. by the A.V. mean literally "son and master."

MIRTH. There are two words in Hebrew which are almost synonymous, *samach* and *sachaq*, and can be indiscriminately translated "enjoy," "laughter," "merry," "mirth" and "rejoice." The second is often used in a derisive sense (cf. Pr. 1²⁸), but the first never. The former occurs in 2¹⁴, 10, 3¹², 2², 4¹⁶, 5¹⁹⁻²⁰, 7⁴, 8¹⁵ and 11⁸, and in 5¹⁸ is translated "pleasure." *Sachaq* occurs four times in 3⁴, 7^{3. 6} and with *samach* in 10¹⁹.

PORTION. The Hebrew of this word (*cheleg*) occurs in every book of the O.T. except Est., Cant. and six of the minor Prophets. Its root means to "distribute," "divide" or "share," and is found in N.H. and Aramaic. In Ecc. it is uniformly translated "Portion," but in other parts of the O.T. A.V. uses several other words. Very often it has the meaning of a lawful right to a share in some land or other possession, and of spoil taken in battle. (Cf. Eccl. 14¹⁴.)

PREACHER. This word has been retained in the text, whatever the original Hebrew—(*Koheleth*)—may mean. The A.V. is the translation of the LXX and Vulg. Ecc. which means a member of the church. In the notes the author will be referred to as K. or Koheleth and his book as Ecc. For the meaning of the word Koheleth (*see* Introduction).

SEE. The common Hebrew word for to see (*Ra'ah*) is found in every chapter of Ecc. and altogether nearly fifty times, always with the basic meaning of to see or look, but according to the context it has several different shades of meaning, e.g. learn, study or experience (1¹⁶). Notice (2¹³), enjoy or fathom (2¹), perceive (3²²), consider (4¹), discover or find out (2³), meditate (7¹⁴), behold (8¹⁷), and regard (11⁴). In 6¹ and 7¹¹ "those who see the sun" is a poetic way of saying "the living."

SERVE (*see* WORK).

SHARE (*see PORTION*).

SORROW. The word translated "sorrow" (*Ka'as*) (5¹⁷, 7³, 11¹⁰), anger (7⁹) and grief (1¹⁸, 2²³) and elsewhere in the O.T. indignation, provocation, vexation and wrath is difficult to define. Anger or wrath is perhaps too strong a word and each is more associated with two or three other common Hebrew words meaning angry. Grief and sorrow also have many other equivalents in Hebrew. Indignation and vexation are probably the most suitable words generally by which to translate it, but not by any means always. T.L. gets over the difficulty by saying that it indicates "excitement of mind or feeling from any cause as context determines." In 7³ it can hardly mean anger and in this version A.V. translation sorrow is retained though E.W.H. dissents. C.D.G. suggests sad thoughtfulness, or thoughtful sadness, or sober reflection and in 7⁹ F.D. fretfulness, which would certainly not do in 7³. T.P.D. thinks disappointment is a good English word by which it may often be translated.

SOUL. The Hebrew *nephesh* for soul, which is such a common word in O.T. is to be found only seven times in Ecc. and in 6⁷, 8 is translated by the A.V. respectively as "appetite" and "desire." In the other five places, 2²⁴, 4⁸, 6²³ and 7²⁸, it is translated "soul," but in each case a personal pronoun is inferred, and is all that is necessary. The Hebrew word hardly corresponds to our conception of soul. It is much more the equivalent of *animus* or *ego* and often indicates the whole person, rather than just a part of oneself. It certainly cannot be called the immortal part of oneself, though it may very well be considered the seat of desire or appetite. It is as A.R.J. says, a somewhat elusive term which admits a remarkably wide range of meaning, and he draws attention to the fact that there is reason to believe that its primitive meaning, like that of the cognate Akkadian and Ugaritic terms was throat or neck, quoting Is. 5¹⁴, Jon. 2⁶ and a few other passages. The word translated "appetite" in 6⁷ might almost equally well be translated throat or gullet, and this might also apply to the same word translated "soul" in the next verse but one.

Frequently the word requires no translation other than a personal pronoun, and in poetry particularly is used "as a fulsome way of saying 'I' or 'thou,'" (N.H.S.).

SPIRIT. The word for Spirit in Hebrew is *Ruach* and can be translated *wind* or *breath* according to the context. It occurs twenty times in Ecc. Sometimes the context makes quite clear, as for example in 1⁶, what is its meaning, but in 1¹⁷, it is debatable whether the translation of this often repeated phrase should be "vexation of spirit" or "striving after wind." The only occasion where the A.V. translates the word by "breath" is 3¹⁹ and there wind would make no sense. Again in 11⁴ wind is the obvious meaning, but in the next verse it *might* mean spirit; so it will be seen that context is not always a safety-valve (*see also under WIND*). In its two senses it can be applied (1) as spirit to God, man and animals, or metaphorically to those of a lowly or lively, humble or haughty spirit; and (2) as wind to any kind of breath from a mere whiff to a whirlwind.

Vexation of spirit has a double meaning in the Original, and there is some difference of opinion among critics which is the right one. The word spirit can admittedly mean spirit or wind, but the reason for vexation is that the A.V., Syr., Targ. and Vulg. thought the word in Hebrew came from a root meaning to break (cf. heart-breaking), but the Revisers (and most modern commentators agree with them), came to the conclusion that this was an erroneous Rabbinical etymology, and that it was a pity to perpetuate it; its real derivation, according to all modern scholars is from a root meaning to *desire* or *strive for* (and so LXX), but this Hebrew word is a homonym and may also mean to "pasture" or "feed" (*see 12¹¹*). The R.V. therefore while giving "striving after wind" as its first choice, admits in the margin two other alternatives, a feeding on wind (*see Hos. 12¹*) and the original A.V. translation. Whichever translation the reader may care to adopt the meaning seems to be a mere straining after the impossible, like trying to muffle the wind or grasp oil in one's hands (cf. Pr. 27⁶), the only result of which is disappointment and

annoyance. A.V. translation has become such a well-known phrase that it seems a pity to alter it, and so in this version it has been retained.

SUN, UNDER THE (*tachath hashemesh*). A phrase peculiar to K. but found in N.H., recurs over and over again, often one feels unnecessarily; but no doubt the author wished for some reason to emphasise the fact that we were nothing but terrestrial beings. Commentators are fond of pointing out that it is the equivalent of sublunary, though in English we should probably use the expression "on earth," which K. does on three occasions (8¹⁴, 16, 11²) and also on three occasions "under the heavens" (1¹⁹, 2³, 3¹).

THING (*see WORD*).

TOIL (*see BUSINESS*).

UNDERSTANDING (*see WISDOM*).

VANITY OF VANITIES (*habbel habh'alm*) is a sort of superlative, like Holy of Holies, or Song of Songs. (The same sort of usage is found in Shakespeare: "My heart of hearts," Hamlet and in more modern authors, e.g. Jane Austen: "place of all places," Henry James: "horror of horrors" and Mrs. Humphrey Ward: "modern of moderns"). The Hebrew for this word means literally vapour or breath, and is here used figuratively. It is consistently translated "vain" or "vanity" by the A.V.—mostly in Job, Ps., Pr. and Jer. In Ecc. it occurs thirty-five times (over half of the total number of times it is found in the whole of the O.T.), but only for the first and last (12⁸) time is the full phrase "Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity" used. It is also found in Eccl. 4¹¹, where the Hebrew corrects the A.V. "mourning." In English the word originally meant futility, emptiness or worthlessness, something that did not last, like vapour—transitoriness, as T.L. points out, not nothingness, but as we would say colloquially "it all ends in smoke." It might be compared with the emanation of one's breath on a frosty morning, which is visible for a short time and then quickly disappears, as indeed the Targ. in its paraphrase of Ps. 90⁹ explains that "a tale that is told" is like "the breath of the mouth in winter," cf. also

Ps. 62⁹ and 144¹, or like a bubble which bursts almost immediately it appears. In English "vanity" has come to have a secondary meaning of pride or self-admiration, but people are so used to the age-long translation of A.V. that, as A.V.D. said, "they could never imagine it to be the same book if that word were left out," but readers should remember that it has not the same significance to-day in Modern English as it had in 1666. No better alternative suggestion has been made and many worse by which to translate it, A.L.W. translates "A Mere Breath," G.H.B. "Emptiness and Inanity," F.C.B. "Bubble of Bubbles," and so on, but most commentators follow the A.V. It might almost be described as the key word of K.'s book, for by its constant repetition he seems determined not to let us forget that the pomps and vanities of this wicked world are a mere flash in the pan.

VEXATION OF SPIRIT (*see* SPIRIT).

WIND (*see* SPIRIT).

WISDOM. The root (*châkâm*) means to be wise and occurs forty-nine times in Ecc. It is always translated "wise," "wisely" or "wisdom." Once in 10³ (q.v.) for some reason the A.V. translates the Hebrew word for "heart" by the same word. Other words with a cognate meaning are knowledge which so translated, or, as a verb, to "know," occurs thirty-three times, and understanding once in 9¹¹. Another attribute of wisdom from the root *sakal* meaning to be prudent or skilful, is found in 1¹⁷ (q.v.) but is translated "folly" by the A.V. (Folly and prudence are very similar words in Hebrew, the only difference being that they are spelt with a different kind of s.) As A.V.D. points out "Wisdom standeth for them all." It is a case of genus and species. (*See also* under FOLLY).

The words wisdom and knowledge occur in close proximity in 1¹⁶⁻¹⁸ and again in 9¹⁰⁻¹². In Hebrew to be wise meant to be firm, well grounded, solid; knowledge is pretty well what the word signifies in English, the poet Cowper explained the difference between the two words by saying, "knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much. Wisdom is humble that he knows no more." Understanding again explains itself,

and is more or less synonymous with comprehension, sense or insight. It might perhaps be noted here that it was one of the *Chakāmim* who was supposed to have inserted many interpolations to counteract Koheleth's unorthodox views. These wise men were the "Humanists" of Israel, moral advisers interested in the education of the young and anxious for the individual happiness of man and the well being of society as a whole (S.R.D.).

WORD (*dabar*). The root of the Hebrew of this word which occurs thirty times in Ecc. is ambiguous, because it may mean either word or matter. It is translated in seven different ways by A.V.—in the former sense: as a noun *word* (fourteen times), as a verb *speak* (3⁷, 7²¹), *commune* (1¹⁶), *utter* (1⁸, 5²), in the latter sense *matter* (10²⁰, 12¹³) and *thing* (seven times). The context generally helps to decide which is right, but is not always reliable, e.g. 1⁸, 6¹¹, 7⁸. "Our business is to speak things," said Oliver Cromwell on one occasion, and Bishop F. R. Barry, quoting him in a Broadcast Sermon, added: "Words become deeds." Both business and deeds are also A.V. translations of this word elsewhere in O.T., and no less than forty others are used for its translation.

WORK (*see* BUSINESS).

YOUTH. There are two words in this Version which are apt to overlap one another—Childhood (*yeledh*) (11¹⁰), or youth (4¹³, 15, 10¹⁶, 11¹⁰ and 12¹) and manhood (*hashchāruth*) (11¹⁰). The first word is a derivative of the root meaning to beget and therefore *offspring*, and is indiscriminately translated by A.V. *boy*, *child*, *fruit*, *son*, *young man*, and in the feminine a *damsel* or *girl* up to marriageable age. The second word which is found in 11⁶ comes from a root meaning "to choose" and therefore indicates a young man in his prime, or as we might say an eligible bachelor. For the word translated in this Version *manhood* (*see* note on 11¹⁰).

INDEX

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>ADVANTAGE, in labour, is there any? 1³, 2¹¹, 3⁸, 5¹⁸; of wisdom, 2¹³, 7¹², 8^{1, 5}, 9¹, 10^{2, 12}; of good over bad, 2²⁶; of man over beast, is there any? 3¹⁸; of quietness over fruitless effort, 4⁶; of companionship, 4⁷⁻¹²; of land, 5⁹; in accumulating goods, is there any? 5¹¹; of a good reputation, of mourning, sorrow, rebuke, finality and patience, 7¹⁻⁸; of wisdom, 8^{1, 5}, 9¹, 10^{2, 12}. (<i>See also</i> Glossary.)</p> <p>Agnosticism, 3^{11, 21}, 6¹², 8¹⁷, 9¹.</p> <p>Akkadian cognate words, 4¹³; p. 142 myths, 9⁶</p> <p>Almond tree, 12⁵</p> <p>Ambiguities and Obscurities, 1^{1, 11}, 3¹¹, 4^{1/}, 4, 8, 14, 16, 5¹¹, 2, 6, 8¹, 14, 20, 6¹⁰, 7⁵, 8, 11, 18, 23, 8¹⁰, 9¹, 10³, 11³, 12⁴</p> <p>Ancient Versions, p. 20[/]</p> <p>Angel, 5⁶</p> <p>Anger, 11¹⁰</p> <p>Apothecary, 10¹</p> <p>Appetite, 2³, 6⁷</p> <p>Aramaic Version, p. 21 (<i>see also</i> New Hebrew words)</p> <p>Aristotelian philosophy, 7¹⁵</p> <p>Aurelius, Marcus, p. 30 (<i>see also</i> Quotations)</p> | <p>Authorities, p. vi^{ff}</p> <p>Authorship of Book, p. 5</p> <p>Autobiography of author, 1^{12-2²⁶}</p> <p>BAAL, p. 135</p> <p>Beast, man and, 3¹⁸⁻²¹</p> <p>Bedchamber, no secrecy even in a, 10²⁰</p> <p>Benefit (<i>see</i> Advantage)</p> <p>Benevolence, 11¹⁻⁸</p> <p>Birds, 9¹², 10²⁰</p> <p>Bone, 11⁵</p> <p>Book, 12¹²</p> <p>Bread = food, 9⁷; upon the water, 11¹</p> <p>Bribe, 7⁷</p> <p>Buddhist influences, 3¹¹</p> <p>Bulwarks, 9¹⁴</p> <p>Business, p. 136, 1¹⁸</p> <p>CANON, admission to the, p. 32</p> <p>Caperberry, 12⁵</p> <p>"Carpe diem," 2²⁴, 3^{12², 22}, 5^{18^{ff}}, 8¹⁶, 9^{7^{ff}}, 11^{8^{ff}}</p> <p>"Cast thy bread . . .", 11¹</p> <p>Chance, 9¹¹</p> <p>Cheerfulness,</p> <p>Child, 10¹⁶, 11¹⁰</p> <p>Circle, 1⁶</p> <p>Cistern (<i>see</i> Well)</p> <p>City, 7¹⁴, 8¹⁰, 9^{14^{ff}}, 10¹⁶</p> <p>Colloquialisms, 2¹⁻¹¹</p> <p>Commentators, pp. 21-27</p> |
|---|---|

- Common sense, 7¹⁶
 Companionship, 4⁹⁻¹²
 Conduct, 7¹⁻¹⁴, 9⁷⁻¹⁰, 11^{1 6/-0/-1},
 12¹
 Contentment, 4¹⁻¹⁶
 Contradictions, p. 9; 11^{1-3 17};
 2^{2-8 15}; 7¹⁵; 2^{13-6 8}; 2^{16/-2 26};
 2^{24-7 2}; 3^{21-8 12} and 12⁷; 4²
 and 7^{1-9 4}; 6^{3-7 17}; 8^{14-9 2}
 Corrupt passages (*see* Emenda-
 tions)
 Cord, silver, 12¹; three-
 fold, 4¹²
 Creator, 12¹
 Curse (*see* Revile)
 Cycle of life, the endless,
 1^{4-7, 8/-}, 3¹⁵
 Cynicism, 10²

 DARKNESS, living in, 2¹⁴, 5¹⁷,
 11⁸; and light, 2¹³, p. 137
 Date, p. 11 (*see also* New
 Hebrew words)
 Dead flies, 10¹; lion, 9⁴
 Death, certainty of, 2¹⁶, 3^{2, 19},
 7^{2, 17}, 8⁸, 9⁵, 12^{6/-}; better
 than life, 4², 7¹
 Desire, satisfied, 2¹⁰; un-
 satisfied, 6^{2, 7, 8}, 12⁵
 Destiny, 6¹⁰
 Diligence, 9¹⁰
 Dining and Wining, 10⁹
 Dislocation Theory, ;
 Among others suggested by
 G.B. are 2¹¹, 3⁸, 5⁸, 7²⁰,
 10¹, 11³
 Dog, 9⁴

 Dreams, 5³
 Drink, advice to eat and, 2²⁴,
 3¹³, 5¹⁸, 8¹⁵, 9⁷
 Drunkenness, the cause of
 unhappiness, 10¹⁷
 Dust, man's body returns to
 3²⁰, 12¹⁷

 EARTH, its durability, 1⁴;
 Eat and drink and be merry,
 advice to, 2²⁴, 3¹³, 5¹⁸,
 8¹⁵, 9⁷
 "Eating one's flesh," 4⁶
 Eating, 5¹², p. 137
 Ecclesiasticus, comparison
 with, p. 27¹¹
 Eggs in one basket, 11³
 Emendations and Corrup-
 tions. The following are
 but a few of many passages
 where emendations of the
 text have been suggested:
 Emendations, 1¹⁷, 2^{8, 23}, 3^{11, 19},
 4¹⁶, 5^{1, 3, 8, 17}, 7¹², 8^{1, 2, 8},
 10, 11, 9^{1, 2, 4}, 10^{1, 8, 20}, 12^{1, 11}
 Enjoyment of life, 3²². (*See*
 also Eat)
 Envy of the successful, 4⁴; of
 the dead, 4²; forgotten by
 dead, 9⁸
 Epicureanism, p. 7, possible
 traces of, 3^{12, 18-22}, 5^{17, 20}, 9⁷⁻⁹
 Equality of everything, 2^{15/-},
 3^{19/-}
 Error, 5⁶, 10⁵
 Everlasting, p. 137
 Eternity, past, 1¹⁰; and

- future, 12⁵, . (*See also Ignorance*)
- Excel (*see Advantage*)
- Excessive righteousness, 7¹⁶
- Extremes, 7^{15/16}
- Eye, p. 138
- FACE, 7³, 8¹
- Fear, p. 138
- Fear of God, 3¹⁴, 8¹², 12¹²
- Feast, a house of feasting, 7²; made for laughter, 10¹⁹
- Fermentation, 10¹
- Find, p. 138
- Fish, 9¹²
- Flies, 10¹
- Flocks, 2⁷
- Folly, as well as wisdom studied by K. 1¹⁷, 2^{9/1}, 12¹² is as inferior to wisdom as darkness is to light, 2¹²; yet fools are no worse off than wise men, 2¹⁶, 6⁸; though they walk in darkness, 2¹⁴; "eat their flesh," 4⁵; cannot take warning, 4¹³; give sacrifice wrongly and are generally unpleasing to God, 5^{1-3/1}, 18; they prefer mirth to mourning, 8^{11/1}; and are always vexed, 7⁸; wicked and mad, 7²⁵; noisy and clamorous, 9¹⁷, 10¹⁴; gauche, 10²; but they often reach high positions, 10⁶; though their folly is self evident, 10⁹;
- destructive, 10^{12/1}; and they are absurdly ignorant, 10¹⁶ (*see also p. 138*)
- Food, 9⁷
- Foreign influences, 15¹¹
- Forethought, 10¹⁰
- Forgotten past, the (*see Oblivion*)
- Frivolity, 7⁴, 6⁸
- Fruit trees, 2⁵
- Futility, 10¹¹
- Future judgment, 3¹⁷, 8¹², 11⁸, 12¹⁴; life, 9¹⁰, 11⁸
- GARDENS, 2⁵ .
- Gibbor*, 9¹¹, 16, 10¹⁰, 17
- Generation, 1⁴
- Gilgamesh epic, 9⁸
- Gin, 9¹², 10²
- Glosses (*see Interpolations*)
- God, His work is unfathomable, 3¹¹, 8⁷, 11⁶; his gifts to men, 2²⁶, 3¹³, 8¹⁵; his eternity, 3¹⁴; his tasks for men, 1¹³, 3¹⁰; seeks the persecuted, 3¹⁵; is the final judge, 3¹⁷, 11⁹, 12¹⁴; should be reverenced, 5^{1/1}, 7¹⁸, 8¹², 12¹³; vows made to him must be paid promptly, 5⁴; he should not be provoked, 5⁶; his gifts to mankind, 5^{16/1}; and especially to the righteous, 7²⁶, 9¹; sometimes he withdraws enjoyment of man's possessions, 6², though he

- approves of lawful enjoyment, 9⁷; his works must be considered, 7¹³; originally he made man upright, 7²⁹; the oath of, 8²; man's spirit returns to, 12⁷
- Gold, 2⁸, 12⁸
- Good old days, the, 7¹⁰
- Grasshopper, 12⁶
- Greek influence, p. 14
versions, p. 20
- Greekisms, in the following passages some authorities think they can trace, 1³, 2¹⁵, 3¹¹, 5¹⁹, 6¹⁹, 7¹⁴, 18, 12¹³. (*See also* Epicureanism and Stoicism.)
- Grinders, 12³
- Grief (*see* Glos. under Sorrow)
- Hand, in the R.T. the Hebrew word for hand occurs in the following passages, 2¹¹, 24, 4¹, 5, 6, 14, 15, 7¹⁸, 26, 9¹⁻¹⁰, 10⁶, 11⁶
- Hap, 2¹⁴, 8¹⁴
- Hardness of the face altered by wisdom, 8¹
- Haste, 1⁸
- Hatred, forgotten by the dead, 9⁶
- Heart. In the R.T. the Hebrew word for heart occurs in the following passages, sometimes twice in one verse, but is not always translated into English, 1¹³, 16, 17, 2¹, 3, 10, 15, 20, 22, 23, 3¹¹, 17, 18, 5², 20, 7², 3, 4, 7, 22, 25, 26, 8⁶, 9, 11, 16, 9¹, 3, 7, 10², 11⁰, 10. (*See also* Glos., p. 139)
- Hendiadys, 8⁶
- Herds, 2⁷
- Higher-est, 5, 12¹⁸
- Historical allusions, possible, 4¹³⁻¹⁶, 9¹⁸, 10¹⁶, 12¹²
- Home, eternal, 12⁵
- Homely, 4¹³, 9¹⁵
- Honour, 6², 10¹
- Horace, p. 31 (*see also* Quotations)
- Horse, 10⁷
- House of God, 5¹, 8¹⁰
- Huddle, 4¹¹
- IDLENESS (*see* Laziness)
- Ignorance, man's, 3¹¹, 7¹⁴, 8¹⁷
- Inheritance, the unfairness of, 2²¹; wisdom as good as an, 7¹¹
- Inhumanity, 4¹⁻³
- Injustice of Life, 4¹⁻³, 3¹⁶, 5⁹, 7⁷, 15-18, 8⁹⁻¹⁵, 9¹³⁻¹⁶
- Inscrutability of God, 3¹¹, 11⁵
- Insincerity. 5¹
- Insomnia, caused by the worry of riches, 5¹¹
- Intemperance, 2¹⁻¹⁶
- Irony, 2²¹⁻²⁶, 5¹⁰
- Irrigation, 2⁶
- Interpolations, Glosses, etc., p. 8, 1¹⁵, 2³, 9, 3¹, 11, 17, 19, 4⁵, 9-12, 15, 5¹⁻⁸, 10, 12, 14, 6⁷,

7¹⁻¹², 13-30, 39, 81, 11-16, 9^{12ff}, 10¹⁴, 11⁴, 7-12⁸, 9-14.

This does not pretend to be an exhaustive list (*see Int.*), but only some of the more likely ones to which attention is drawn in the notes

JEALOUSY, 4⁴, 9⁶

Jerusalem, 1¹, 12⁸, 16, 27, 9

Judgment and/or justice, of the righteous and the wicked, 3¹⁷; perversion of, 5⁸; comes to every man, 8^{5f}; 8¹¹⁻¹³, 11⁸, 12¹⁴

KEEPERS of the house, 12³

King, the author as, 1¹, 12; treasures of a, 2⁸; successor to a, 2¹²; a foolish, 4^{13f}; servant of the soil, 5⁹; command of a, 8^{2f}; his powerful word, 8⁴; investment of a small city by a, 9¹⁴; two kinds of, 9^{16f}; *l'es majeste*, 9²⁰

Knowledge, pursuit of, 11²⁻¹⁸; pleasures of, 7¹⁸

Koheleth, p. 5, 1¹; under Preacher, p. 141

LABOUR, is there any advantage in? 1³, 3^{8f}, 5¹⁶; brings joy, 2¹⁰, 2², and should be accompanied by merry living, 5¹⁸, 8¹⁶, 9^{7, 8}, but is

vain, 2¹¹; is doubtful advantage to one's successor, 2¹⁸⁻²³, 5^{14f}, and is nonexistent to the dead, 9¹⁰; of God is unfathomable, 3¹¹, 8¹⁷, 11⁵; His gift of it to man, 3¹³, 5¹⁹; if successful causes envy, 4⁴; restfulness is better than, 4⁶; unaided is uneconomical, 4^{8f}; cause dreams, 5³, and sleeplessness, 8¹⁶; if successful never satisfies the owner, 6⁷; to fool is wearisome, 10¹⁶; will eventually be judged, 12¹⁴. (*See also Glos. under Business*)

Language and style, p. 12^f

Latin Version, p. 21

Laughter is madness, 2²; a time for, 3⁴; worse than vexation, 7³; of the fool, (7⁶) *See also Glos. under Mirth*)

Laziness of a fool, 4⁸; cause deterioration, 10¹⁸

Life is hateful when vain, 2¹; getting pleasure out of, 3¹², 9⁹; the end of, 3¹⁸⁻²²; is the gift of God, 5¹⁸, 8¹⁵; is short, 5²⁰; is a shadow, 6¹⁰⁻¹²; is preserved by wisdom, 7¹²

Limitation of man's knowledge, 3¹¹, 8¹⁷

Lion, a living dog better than a dead, 9⁴

Loan words (*see Aramaisms*)
 Locust (*see Grasshopper*, 12⁶)
 Long home (*see Eternal*, 12⁸)
 Loneliness, 4⁷⁻¹²
 Love, a time for, 3⁸; of silver and opulence never satisfied, 5¹⁰; forgotten after death, 9⁶

MADNESS, tested, 1¹⁷, 2¹²; of laughter, 2²; of folly, 7²⁵; man is full of, 9³, 10¹³
(See also Glos., p. 140)

Man, p. 140
 Man and beast, 3¹⁸⁻²²
 Manhood, 11⁹

Mastery over other's labours, 2¹⁰; over digestion, 5¹⁹; lack of mastery over same, 6²; of a city, 7¹⁹; over death impossible, 8⁸

Metonymy, 12⁷

Mirth and merriment, both vanity, 2¹¹; at a feast, 10¹⁹; should go with work, 8¹⁶
(See also Glos., p. 141)

Mistresses, 2⁸

Memory (*see Oblivion*)

Moderation, 10¹⁷

Money (*see Riches*)

Mourning, a time for, 3⁴; a house of, 7²; in the streets at a death, 12⁶

NAME, a good, 7¹

New, nothing, 1⁹

New Hebrew words, Ara-

maisms, and Grammatical Peculiarities, p. 15, 1^{9, 10, 12, 13, 15}, 2^{3, 8, 10, 20, 21, 25}, 3^{1, 6, 11, 12, 18}, 4^{2, 4, 11, 12}, 5^{6, 8, 10, 13, 19}, 6⁵, 7^{14, 21, 25}, 8^{1, 2, 9ff, 16, 10^{8, 9, 17}, 12^{3, 11, 12, 13}. This is by no means a complete list but contains most of those about which there can be little doubt.}

New Testament, 5¹⁶, 7²⁰, 8¹⁵
 Numerals, one, 4⁸⁻¹¹; two, 4^{8, 11}, 7¹⁶; three, 4¹²; seven, 11²; eight, 11²; ten, 7¹⁸; thousand, 6⁶

OATH (*see Vow*)
 Object of the Book,
 Oblivion, 1¹¹, 2¹⁶, 9⁶
 Ointment, 7¹, 10¹
 Old age, picture of advancing, 12²⁻⁷
 Old days, the good, 7¹⁰
 Omar Khayyam, p. 30¹.
(See also Quotations)
 Oppression, 3^{7ff}, 4^{1ff}, 5⁸, 7⁷, 8¹⁻⁹, 9⁶, 10⁸⁻¹¹
 Opulence, 5¹⁰
 Orchard, 2⁵
 Ostracism, 7¹⁶

PARTNERSHIP, 4⁸⁻¹²
 Patience, 7⁸
 Perfumer, 10¹
 Persian influence, words and references, p. 17, 6³, 8^{11, 13}, 10¹⁶, 11¹⁰

- Pessimism, p. 7, 1¹⁴/₁, 1⁹, 2¹, 2³, 2¹¹, 1³, 1⁷, 2⁶, 3¹⁰, 4¹⁵, 4, 8, 10, 5¹⁰, 12–15, 6², 9, 7¹, 6, 27¹, 8¹⁰, 14, 11⁸
- Pitcher, broken at the fountain, 1²⁶
- Pleasure, the vanity of, 2¹
- Poetry, p. 17
- Political life, 4⁷, 5⁸
- Poor, 4¹⁴, 5⁸, 6⁸
- Popularity, 4¹³–16
- Portion, p. 141
- Prayer, 5²/₁, 9¹⁷
- Preacher, the (*see* Koheleth)
- Predestination, 6¹⁰
- Profit (*see* Advantage)
- Prose, p. 17 129
- Proverbs, 1¹⁵, 1⁸, 2¹⁴, 4⁵/₁, 6⁷, 7⁵–7, 8⁷–9¹⁹, 8¹, 9¹²–17–10¹⁷, 8–20, 11³/
- Province, 2⁸
- Purpose of the Book, p. 10
- QUESTIONS, expecting a negative answer, 1³, 1¹⁰, 2², 1², 1⁵, 1⁹, 2², 2⁵, 3¹⁰, 21¹, 6⁸, 11¹, 7¹³, 16, 24, 8¹, 4
- Quiet, 9¹⁷, 10²⁰
- Quotations—
- Ahikar, 5², 7¹, 9⁴
 - Aristotle, 7¹⁶
 - Atlee, 3¹³
 - Aurelius, Marcus, p. 30, 1¹⁰, 5², 12¹²
 - Buddha, 7¹⁶
 - Byron, 7²¹
 - Chaucer, 4⁹
 - Dryden, 2¹⁰
- Epictetus, 2¹⁰
- Euripides, 12⁶
- Hesiod, 7²⁸
- Homer, 3¹, 4⁹
- Horace, p. 31, 5¹⁰, 1², 7¹⁰, 1⁴
- Juvenal, 5¹⁰
- Lucretius, 12⁶
- Malay pr., 4¹²
- Midrash, 10³
- Milton, 7¹⁸
- Moore, 12⁵
- Omar Khayyam, p. 30¹, 2¹⁰, 2⁴, 4⁴, 5¹⁸, 6³, 8¹⁷, 12⁵
- Pike Aboth, 4¹¹
- Plato, 4⁹
- Sadi, 10²⁰
- Scott, 10²⁰, 12⁴
- Shakespeare, 7¹, 15, 11², 12⁵
- Shaw, p. 17, 3¹
- Talmud, 4¹², 5²
- Tennyson, 3²
- Virgil, 1⁶
- Zulu pr., 1¹⁰
- RACE, not to the swift, 9¹¹
- Rejoice in thy youth, 11⁸
- Remember thy Creator, 12¹
- Reputation, 7¹
- Restfulness, 4⁶, 19¹⁷
- Reward, 9⁵
- Rich and poor, 5¹²
- Riches, hoarded up for others, 5¹²; unfair distribution of, 9¹¹; useless to promote happiness, 6². (*See also* Wealth)
- Righteous and the wicked, the, 7¹⁶, 9²

- Righteousness, excessive, 7¹⁶
 Right thing to do, in search of
 the, 2³
 Rivalry,
 River (*see* Wady)
 Round of nature, the eternal,
 1⁵⁻⁷
 Ruler, 10^{4-7, 16f., 20}
- SACRIFICE of fools, 5¹
 Sadducees, p. 5, 9⁵
 Sarcasm and Satire, 2⁹, 3⁹, 10²
 Scoffers and Scorners, 6¹⁻¹²
 Sea, always remains at the
 same level, 1⁷
 Season for everything, 3¹⁻⁸
 (*see* p. 141)
 Septuagint, p. 20
 Serpent, 10^{8, 11}
 Share, (*see* Portion)
 Shaw, G. B., p. 7, 3¹
 Silence, a time for, 3⁷
 Silver cord, 12⁸
 Sin, 5⁶, 8¹², 12¹⁴, 2¹⁸, 2⁶, 7²⁰⁻²⁶
 Slang, 1¹⁰, 2¹, 3¹²
 Sleeplessness, 5¹¹
 Sloth, 10¹⁸
 Social injustice, 4¹⁻³
 Solitude, the disadvantages
 of, 4⁷⁻¹²
 Solomon, p. 1¹⁷
 Song, daughters of, 12⁴
 Sorrow, p. 142
 Soul, p. 142
 Sow thy seed, 11⁶
 Speech is wearisome, 1⁸;
 must be timely, 3⁷, and
- not prolix, 5²
 Spirit, vexation of, 1^{14, 17},
 2^{11, 17, 28}, 4^{4, 6, 16}, 6⁹; of
 man and beast, 3^{19, 21};
 the patient and proud in,
 7^{8/}; of a ruler, 10⁴; the
 way of the, 11⁵; returns
 to its Creator, 12⁷. (*See*
 also Wind), and 7^{8, 9}, 10⁴, 11⁶
 (*See also* Glos., p. 143)
 Stoicism, p. 7, 1⁴⁻¹⁷, 2¹², 3²⁻⁸,
 15, 16, 18, 7^{15, 25}, 9^{11f.}, 10¹³
 Straighten, 1¹⁵
 Study, 1^{4, 17}, 12¹²
 Success brings envy, 4⁴
 Sun, rising of the, 1⁵; seeing
 the, 7¹¹, 11⁷, 12². (*See also*
 Under the sun and p. 144)
 Synecdoche, some examples
 of, 2^{8, 11}, 4⁸, 5^{1, 8, 17}, 6²
 7²², 11^{1, 5}
 Syriac Version, p. 20
- TARGUM, the, p. 21
 Task which God gives to man,
 1¹³
 Theognis, p. 31
 Thing, 1¹⁰, 6¹¹, 7⁸, 8^{1, 5}. (*See*
 also Word)
 Threefold cord, a, 4¹²
 Time for everything, 3^{1-8, 17};
 everything fits in with, 3¹¹;
 for judgment, 8⁶
 Title of the book, p. 4
 Toil (*see* Glos. under
 Business)
 Translation theory, p. 30

- Treasures, royal and provincial, 2⁸
- Tree fall, if a, 11³
- Trees, 2⁶; thicket of, 2⁶
- "Two are better than one," 4⁹⁻¹²
- UNDER the sun, 1^{3, 9, 14, 211,}
^{17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 3¹⁰, 4^{1, 3, 7, 15,}}
- 5^{13, 18, 6^{1, 5, 12, 8^{9, 15, 17, 9^{3,}}}}
- 6, 9, 11-13, 10⁵
- Ugaritic cognate words, p. 142
- VANITY, all is, 1^{2, 14, 2^{11, 15, 24,}}
- 3^{10, 11^{8, 12⁸}}; various forms of, 2^{1, 15, 19, 21, 23, 4^{4, 8, 10,}}
- 5^{10, 6^{9, 7^{6, 8^{10, 14}}}; and vexation, 2^{11, 17, 26, 4⁴}; under the sun, 4⁷; upon the earth, 8¹⁴; of having but not enjoying, 6²; of an untimely birth, 6⁴; days of, 6^{12, 7^{15, 9⁹}}; dreams and, 5⁷; childhood and youth is, 11¹⁰. (*See also* p. 144)}
- Vexation, 1^{14, 17, 2^{11, 17, 22, 26,}}
- 4^{6, 4-16} (*See also* p. 143)
- Vineyard, 2⁴
- Vow, 5^{4-6, 8^{2, 9²}}
- Vulgate, p. 21
- WADY, 1⁷
- Wandering, 6⁹
- War, 3^{18, 9¹¹}
- Wealth, without health or enjoyment, 6²; vanity of, futility of. (*See also* Riches)
- Weary, 1^{6, 10¹⁵}
- Well, 12⁸
- Wheel, "broken at the," 12⁶
- Whet, 2^{3, 10¹⁰}
- Wicked, the judgment of, 3¹⁶; apparent success of, 7¹⁵; burial of, 8¹⁰; will not prolong his life, 8¹³; receives the same fate as the righteous, 9²
- Wind, 1^{6, 5^{18, 8^{8, 10¹⁴}}. (*See also* Spirit)}
- Wine, 2^{3, 9^{7, 10¹⁹}}
- Wisdom, K.'s search for, 1¹³; his study and attainment of it, 1¹⁶, 7^{23, 25, 12⁰}; contrasted with folly, 2³⁻¹²; is a stand-by, 2⁹; folly, 2^{19³}; yet the same end is for both wise and foolish, 2¹⁶, 9¹⁰; a wise man may be succeeded by a foolish heir, 2¹⁹⁻²¹; is given to the good man, 2²⁶; and poverty better than folly, 4¹³; is there any advantage in, 6⁸; proverbs about, 1^{18, 7^{17,}}
- 7, 11^{7, 19, 8^{1, 5, 9^{17, 10^{1, 10, 12,}}}}
- 12¹¹; advice not to be otherwise, 7¹⁶; cannot fathom God's ways, 8¹⁷; can deliver a city, 9¹³⁻¹⁸ (*See also* p. 145)
- Wisdom, Book of, p. 22
- Woman, the wickedness of, 7²⁶⁻²⁹
- Word, 1^{1, 5^{22, 37, 8^{4, 9^{18^{f, 10^{13^{f,}}}}}}}
- 12^{10^{f, 13}}. (*See also* Thing and Glos., p. 146)

Worship, 5 ¹⁻⁷	YOUTH, with wisdom better
Work, the futility of, 2 ¹⁸⁻²⁶ ; pleasure of, 2 ¹⁰ , 3 ^{13, 22} , 5 ¹⁰ ; of God, 3 ¹¹ , 8 ¹⁵ . (<i>See also</i> Glos. under Business)	than senility, 4 ¹³ ; without experience is dangerous, 10 ¹⁶ ; the pleasures of, 11 ^{8ff} ; must remember its Creator, 12 ¹ . (<i>See also</i> p. 146)
World, its unchangeableness, 1 ⁴	